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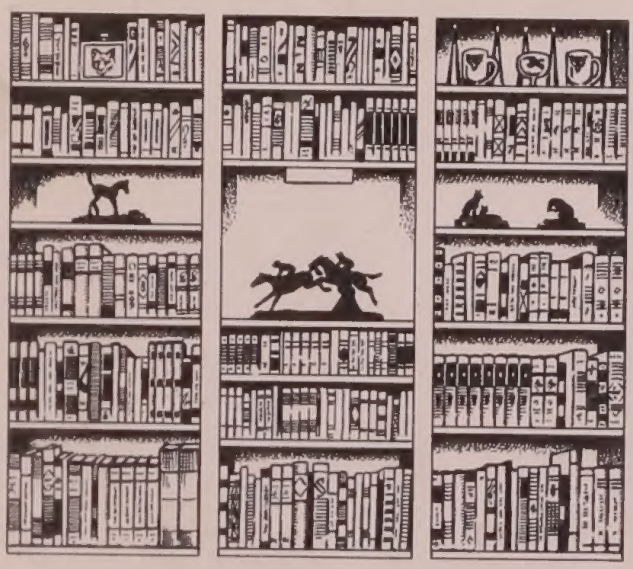

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SHOOTING IN NORTH AMERICA.

SHOOTING AND FISHING

IN THE

RIVERS, PRAIRIES, AND BACKWOODS

OF

NORTH AMERICA.

BY

BENEDICT HENRY RÉVOIL,

(EDITOR OF THE "JOURNAL DE CHASSEURS").

TRANSLATED AND REVISED

BY

THE CHRONICLER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

TINSLEY BROTHERS, 18, CATHERINE ST., STRAND.

1865.

LONDON:
BRADBURY AND EVANS, PRINTERS, WHITEFRIARS.

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE.

Last spring I received a visit from M. Révoil, who expressed a desire that his sporting sketches and reminiscences of adventure in the Northern States of America should be introduced to the British public. They had acquired considerable popularity in France, and as, upon examination, they appeared to me to have considerable merit, I consented to put them into an English dress. Of course, there are features in them which will seem strange to the British taste, and our sportsmen may possibly object to some of the methods adopted as not quite orthodox. They contain however, in my opinion, what will be found to be a very fair repertory of sport in North America; and if they serve to amuse and to foster a taste for sport, and that love of adventure which is so inherent a quality in my fellow-countrymen, the object of their publication will be gained.

THE CHRONICLER.

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

The publication of a book of sport, after the works of such Nimrods as Elzéar Blase, Deyeux, Foudras, Délegorque, Leon Bertrand and Jules Gérard may seem to my readers a proof of self-conceit. I wish, however, to prove my innocence of that crime—should I ever be accused of it—by placing this preface at the head of the following pages.

During a residence of nine years in the United States (i.e. from 1841 to 1849) my passion for adventure often tempted me into desert wilds and distant shores, in search of birds and quadrupeds unknown to the European sportsman. I have seen much, and have taken a great many notes, and by the aid of this and of my memory I have compiled for the gratification of my brethren in St. Hubert a series of fantastic sporting scenes, in which the principal actors are Indians, trappers, squatters, whites and negroes.

The description of a new country and of a luxu-

riant Nature, the strangeness of the facts, the admixture of the marvellous into the story, seem to me likely to render my book interesting to the reader, and the kindness with which the public has already accepted some of the chapters in this volume which have appeared in certain Magazines and Journals leads me to hope that now that I have collected them they will be received with equal favour. I will quote a well-known saying, by way of excusing (if that be necessary) the eccentricities of my book:

"*Scribitur ad narrandum, non ad probandum,*"

which I take to mean, when freely translated,—

"Sportsmen's stories are not Gospel truth."

After this preamble, I address myself to my task.

There is no country in the world where sport has so many attractions as America, especially to us Europeans who are compelled, before we can gratify ourselves in this way at home, to obtain a licence to carry arms, take out licences and undergo a variety of other legal formalities, to avoid becoming amenable to the police or the gamekeepers. In the United States, the right to sport is free everywhere. Provide yourself with a gun and ammunition, a game-bag and a dog, and you may walk out north,

south, east, or west, and sport everywhere at your pleasure; no man will attempt to stay your course over any field, or through any wood. The only close season for this unlimited sport is during the breeding season—from the 15th of April to the 4th of July—and even during that period you may kill hares, deer, birds of passage, water-fowl, bears, panthers, and all noxious animals. The only birds subject to the game-laws are the partridge (quail), grouse, turkeys, &c., above all, woodcocks. Woe be to you, if you are found shooting woodcocks during the close time. The first-comer, even though he be but a simple ploughman, will summons you for the fact, and you will be mulcted by the nearest magistrate in the sum of five dollars for every "long-beak" found in your game-bag. It happened to myself one day, the 25th of June, 1842, to be arrested by a wood-cutter, a few leagues from New York, with eleven woodcocks in my pocket. I was taken forthwith before the authorities at Hastings, and should have been compelled to pay the large sum of eleven pounds if I had not been able to prove to the satisfaction of the judge that, being a foreigner, I was unacquainted with the laws of the country. My excuse was admitted, and I was let off on confiscation of my game—which the judge's clerk (as I afterwards learnt) proceeded to make into a capital pie.

The woodcock of the United States is smaller than his European congener and has no other resemblance to *Scolopax rusticola* than the plumage, the identity of which is perfect. Follow the course of a stream on the morning of the 4th of July; penetrate the swamps of some marshy wood, or the windings of a thick cane-brake, and at every step your good pointer will be stopped, and a cock get up from before the very end of his nose. From that moment, all depends on your own skill. One morning in the woods of Tarry Town, on the banks of the Hudson, a friend and myself in two hours had emptied our powder-flasks and bagged fifty-five cocks. We had missed double the number.

The American partridge (*Tetrao coturnix*) is a small bird, scarcely so large as a full-sized European quail, and its plumage very closely resembles that of our gray partridge. It resembles it moreover in its habits, and knows better than to perch like a thrush, when there 's danger afoot. How many times on the heights of Hoboken, towards the right bank of the Hudson, or in the thickets of Long Island, some leagues from New York, have I amused myself with following up from point to point one or two large bevies of these birds, which rise and go off with a tremendous noise, and only scatter when they have thoroughly comprehended the impossibility of resistance. The flight of the American partridge is

really extraordinary, and I have often followed with the eye, by the aid of a pocket-glass, one of these birds as he crossed the Hudson, and alighted a mile and a quarter from the point where he was flushed, in the midst of a tuft of rushes, on some sandhill by the side of the bank.

The North American grouse are divided into two distinct families—the *partridges*, which are enormous birds, as big as a fowl; and the *pinnated grouse* (a kind of rough-footed pheasant), something like our European grouse family, whom they resemble greatly in their habits. Like the French pheasant, the American grouse lives in the midst of covers, feeds on the grain of the neighbouring farms, and is hunted by pointers. It is not uncommon, when shooting these birds in the State of Connecticut, and above all, in those of Missouri and Kentucky, to be obliged to return home on account of the fullness of the game-bag. Besides, a dozen of these grouse are a load sufficient for a sportsman to carry, and you may return in the afternoon to continue your sport after these admirable birds, the flesh of which affords the most delicate eating in the world.

And now, since I have touched upon this delicate question of Epicurean philosophy, it would be impossible to avoid mentioning the Canvas-back Duck, a bird whose flavour is unparalleled. This bird of passage frequents more particularly the waters of

the Potomac, in the neighbourhood of Baltimore, where it feeds upon an acquatic plant known as the *Valisneria*, upon which it bestows its generic name. Immunerable flights of these ducks are found on the waters of Chesapeake Bay, where the plants which are its favourite food grow in abundance. It is to the root of the wild celery that the canvas-back owes its exquisite flavour, and it is so highly esteemed in the United States, that a pair is worth from three to four dollars in the markets of New York, Philadelphia, and Boston. It is with the aid of decoys that the canvas-backs are usually caught; but battues are frequently organized with flotillas of boats to shoot them with duck-guns. The sportsmen of Chesapeake Bay are so jealous of their rights, that in certain treaties between the neighbouring States, special clauses have been introduced to regulate the boundaries for getting these birds reserved to each of the contracting parties. Some years ago, the infraction of this article in a treaty was the cause of a very serious quarrel between the inhabitants of Philadelphia and those of Baltimore, and the dispute became so bitter that gun-boats were chartered with armed men on board, to prevent all further breaches of the regulations, and if the Washington Government had not conciliated the parties, blood would inevitably have been spilled.

The present volume contains a chapter entirely

devoted to the passenger-pigeon; but I should not forget to mention here the countless flights of thrushes, which in the United States yearly darken the very air during the month of October. Never is there such noisy chattering in the woods as when that feathered tribe visits them. The *robins* —as the Americans term these chattering thrushes, cry out as loudly as if they were deaf, and deaf, indeed, they must be, for the report of a gun does not even make them resume their flight, and thus, without quitting the cover in which the thrushes have alighted, the sportsman may use his powder and shot at his leisure, and fill his bag with ease.

If we travel from the Northern States down west, in the direction of Louisiana, we shall find species of birds and animals which are unknown in the colder climates of Massachusetts and New England. This mountainous country is well-wooded and picturesquely divided by streams, ponds, and lakes of every dimension. The forests are composed of pine, birch, cedar, wild cherry, hawthorn, sweet brier, and willows. Here and there handsome oaks, hazels, sumachs and canes, complete the vegetable riches with which the soil is covered. In the thickets which the sportsman penetrates, and in the full undergrowth of the prairies, he finds at every step recent traces of game, and he sees flying from him in thousands birds of brilliant plumage,

variegated with blue, rose-colour, yellow, violet, and white.

Among others there is the rice-bird (the becafico of America), whose ravages are so serious in the rice-fields of the country. Hence it is that throughout the United States a desperate war is waged against the little fellow. Towards sun-set, when the rice-birds darken the air and descend upon the plantations of ripened grain, it is good fun to join in the platoon firing which the sportsmen of the vicinity keep up against the little thieves. Millions of these birds are slain yearly by this incessant war, and nevertheless, instead of diminishing in number, the rice-birds seem to increase in proportion to the means taken for destroying them.

Since my narrative has led me into the warmer zones, I must not forget one of the most delightful of the North American birds, he whose song replaces the harmonious melodies of the European nightingale. I always remember with a feeling of genuine pleasure a certain pic-nic breakfast in the neighbourhood of Baton-Rouge, where I heard for the first time the song of the Mocking Bird. This singular bird, who earns its name by the admirable aptness with which it imitates the notes of all the other inhabitants of the air, is as remarkable for its warbling as for the agility with which it uses it, for, without keeping silence for a single moment,

it raises and lowers its notes unceasingly. The plumage of the Mocking-Bird is not very handsome, but its shape is slender and graceful, its movements easy and elegant, and its eyes full of fire and intelligence. To all these physical qualities the Mocking Bird joins that of a flexible and sonorous voice, which is capable of a vast variety of modulation, and of rendering every shade of sound. If he hear the lark trilling, he trills too; should the dove coo in his neighbourhood, he will answer the soft complaining of the dove; if a parrot chatters at him from a branch, he will chatter as cleverly as the parrot; and if the blackbird whistle from beneath the foliage, he will whistle back a perfect parody. If a traveller pass by humming a song, the Mocking Bird will reproduce the air like an echo. Sometimes he imitates the cry of the eagle, and often he will cry like a child or laugh like a young girl. In a word, this extraordinary bird possesses to extremity the gift of imitation, and in listening to him you are astonished at the sweetness which his fine organ imparts to the songs of the birds that he copies. When, at dawn, the winged songsters of the forest commence their different tunes, the Mocking Bird, perched on a tree indulges in a solo which dominates over all other songs. One would take him for a tenor of the first rank, whom all the other birds accompany by way of chorus. Moreover,

the talents of the Mocking Bird are not confined to that of imitation, his own song is melodious and full of vigour; but suddenly, in the midst of a beautifully-cadenced trill he will stop short and give way to a fancy for imitation, and this improvisation mixed with plagiarisms will often last for an entire hour. With wings extended, and his tail, speckled with white, spread out like a fan, he frisks and preens himself in a manner most charming to the eye, whilst the ear is astonished and delighted at the voice.

Nothing is more curious than to watch this bird pirouetting, as if he was seized with madness, or a passing fit of frenzy. Audubon, the celebrated American naturalist, declares that the Mocking Bird "rises sometimes into the air with the rapidity of an arrow, as if flying after his soul which he had allowed to escape with his song." A blind man listening to the Mocking Bird might easily fancy that he was present at a concert in which all the birds of the air were competing for the supremacy of song, as the shepherds did in the Eclogues of Theocritus and Virgil. Besides, not only are the naturalist and the sportsman often deceived by the imitations of the Mocking Bird, but the birds themselves who swarm around him are uncertain whether to take his mocking voice for truth or falsehood. Sometimes you will see them, filled with alarm, take refuge in a thicket. And why? The Mocking Bird has imi-

tated the cry of a falcon, and has caused this unexpected panic.

And yet in spite of all the excellent qualities of the American nightingale I am loth to confess that many a time he falls a victim to the gun of the sportsman. And wherefore is this pretty creature slain? Because his flesh is succulent and of exquisite flavour. Here lies the secret of this barbarous act.

Sport is so abundant in North America that the sportsman more frequently finds his ammunition run short than any lack of game. As an example of this, I will quote a passage from a newspaper which I have every reason to believe to be quite authentic. It is an account of a sporting expedition which took place in the county of Shefford (Canada), near a village called Frost. The inhabitants of this place assembled at the Golden Eagle Tavern to consult how best to destroy the vast quantities of wild creatures which threatened destruction to the harvest of the vicinity, and it was resolved that the marauding birds and quadrupeds should be made the subject of a kind of massacre of St. Bartholomew. Two leaders were appointed to organize the slaughter, and each of these selected seventy-five companions, who for an entire week went shooting under their orders. Messrs. Asa B. Foster and Augustus Wood were the leaders, and on the 19th

of April, 1856, the game was counted, and the following was the tale :—

	Foster's Party.	Wood's Party.
Foxes	50	50
Sparrow-hawks	50	25
Crows	60	100
Woodpeckers	720	420
Polecats	270	120
Black and gray squirrels	660	673
Red and striped squirrels	41,620	33,150
Weasels	80	20
Jays	2,570	1,860
Owls	160	140
Blackbirds	3	2
Pigeons	—	1
	46,243	36,561
	36,561	
Grand total	82,804 head.	

B. H. RÉVOIL.

SPORT IN NORTH AMERICA.

THE BALD-HEADED AMERICAN EAGLE.

If I open these sporting sketches with the eagle, it is not, by any means, because I hold that bird of prey in any honour. He is the type of brute strength, rapacity, carnage, and selfishness. Surely this is why, ever since the declaration of American independence, the eagle has become the heraldic emblem of the vast republic of the United States.

The great Franklin himself deplored the choice of his countrymen, as the following words will serve to show:—

"For my part" (he wrote in 1783), "I wish the bald eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country. He is a bird of bad moral character; he does not get his living honestly. You may have seen him perched on some dead tree, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labours of the fishing-hawk; and when that diligent

bird has at length taken a fish, and is bearing it to his nest for the support of his mate and young ones, the bald eagle pursues him and takes it from him. With all this injustice, he is never in good case, but, like those among men who live by sharping and robbing, he is generally poor, and often very lousy. Besides, he is a rank coward; the little king bird, no bigger than a sparrow, attacks him boldly, and drives him out of the district. He is, therefore, by no means a proper emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America, who have driven all the 'king birds' from our country! though exactly fit for that order of knights which the French call Chevaliers d'Industrie."*

This letter by Benjamin Franklin was shown to me by a learned bibliopolist of Philadelphia, who preserved it among his collection of autographs, and I admit that I entirely agree with the opinion of the eminent statesman. This gentleman, moreover, knowing me to be very fond of sporting, gave me the following account of the great American eagle:—

"Three years ago, in the month of November, I was going down the Mississippi in a frail skiff, rowed by two negroes. I was on my way to Memphis. As winter was approaching, the surface

* The letter by Franklin, condemnatory of the choice of the Bald Eagle (*Haliaëtus leucocephalus*), has been printed in English letters.—TRANS.

of the great river was covered with large flocks of waterfowl, who had quitted the northern seas and the great frozen lakes, to seek a milder refuge in the temperate climates of our Southern States. On a sudden, one of my men pointed to one of the topmost branches of an oak, where a gigantic eagle was perched, whose watchful eye appeared to look afar, and who seemed to hear every sound. A moment afterwards, the other boatmen pointed out, on the opposite bank of the Mississippi, the consort of this eagle, perched as her spouse was, and seeming as if she were persuading him not to abandon his post, by ever and anon uttering sharp, piercing screams, which echoed along the banks of the stream. At this signal, the male bird flapped his wings, and answered by similar cries, which resembled the laugh of a maniac more than anything else. Resting upon their oars, my negroes allowed the boat to float with the stream, whilst I examined the eagles attentively, and observed that they allowed myriads of ducks and teal to swim by, as if they were food quite unworthy of their stomachs, as I very soon understood from what ensued. At length my ears were aware of a piercing scream; it was that of the female; and at the same moment I heard, like the hoarse sound of a clarion, the cry of a flock of swans, flying southward through space. Looking towards the north, up the stream, I soon perceived the snowy-plumed travellers, beating

the air with their short wings, their necks stretched out, their feet pressed up against their bellies, looking eagerly around, as if they scented danger. The flock consisted of five swans, flying, as usual, in the shape of a triangle; but the one at the head of the party seemed more fatigued than the others. This unfortunate the eagles had selected for their prey. At the moment when he passed the oak, on which the male eagle was perched in ambush, the latter opened his wings, and uttering a formidable cry, dashed upon the poor victim like a meteor. The four other swans dropped instantly upon the waters of the river. The poor swan endeavoured in vain to escape. His enemy struck him under the belly and wings with ceaseless ferocity during five or six minutes, finishing by throwing him down upon the bank with his back upon the ground.

"Then it was that the boatmen and myself witnessed the most hideous sight that you can imagine. The bird of prey tore open with his sharp talons the bloody plumage of the beautiful inhabitant of the north, growling his delight over the last convulsions of his victim, whilst his beak sought its way to the entrails of the expiring swan; and all the while this murder was being committed, the female sat perched upon her tree, taking no trouble in the matter, as if she was perfectly confident in the prowess of her lord and master to perpetrate this infamous act. At length, however, when the swan

had ceased to struggle, she seemed to understand that the banquet was about to begin, so dashing across the river in a twinkling, she set to work without asking leave or waiting for an invitation. I had waited for this moment to take my part in the matter, so I ordered my niggers to row gently towards the bank, where the two birds of prey thought themselves so secure from punishment. Without paying the slightest attention to our movements, they continued to gorge themselves with the blood and fragments of the flesh of the swan, so that we soon came within range. My gun was charged with buck shot, and I aimed and fired. The shot was a good one: the female never stirred; both the wings of the male were broken, and we had to kill him by knocking him on the head with the paddles. We did this as carefully as possible, for I intended having them both stuffed and did not wish to spoil the skin. In this I succeeded admirably, and here" (added the narrator, opening the door of his dining-room, and leading the way into it) "here are the two murderous ruffians of the Mississippi, stuffed and set up by one of our cleverest taxidermists."

I admired the beauty of those two magnificent specimens of the large eagle, commonly called the Eagle of the States, or Bald-headed Eagle. The head is well furnished with feathers, but, as they are white, at a certain distance he seems to be bald.

I never saw finer specimens. They measured eight feet and a quarter from wing to wing.

The first time I ever saw one of these Lammergeyers of the United States close to, was on the banks of a small lake, at the foot of the Adirondack mountains, in the State of New York. Let the reader picture to himself an immense amphitheatre of water, surrounded by steep, perpendicular rocks, so as to look like a cask two-thirds filled with water. On one of the rocks, an ancient oak was growing, looking, by the size of its bole, as if it had been there for centuries. Its roots filled every interstice. This oak reared itself about forty feet above the underwood, on the brink of the precipice.

One morning I happened to be there, accompanied by a zealous and experienced English sportsman, named Whitehead, who (probably for the purpose of giving the lie to his name) covered his bald head with a wig as black as ebony. One of our fellow sportsmen (the celebrated Herbert, better known as Frank Forester, who happened not to be with us at the time) had often joked Whitehead about this part of his costume, and I had allowed myself a few pleasantries upon the same subject, without ever suspecting the important service which it was to render him.

We had gone over the ground for about five hours after gelinottes and quails, and our bag was about

three parts full, and we had determined to rejoin Frank Forester, when suddenly Whitehead looked up, and uttered a cry of delight. On one of the branches of the old tree there was an eagle's nest, inhabited without a doubt, for he perceived a movement among the twigs and branches of which it was composed. Clearly, there were eaglets in the nest.

Without so much as throwing down his gun and bag, to run up the bole of the tree was the work of a moment, for my companion was a practised gymnast, and the feat was executed without the slightest attention to the prudential warnings which I offered him. In a trice, he was hidden by the thick foliage, and then I saw him close to the nest, craning his neck over, to see what it contained. "Good gracious!" cried he; "two eaglets! and they are opening their beaks as if they would like to swallow me." "Look out!" I cried, "here come the father and mother. Come down! come down!"

It was no use calling out; the mad-cap climbed higher and higher, and presently he seized one of the eaglets and thrust it into the bosom of his flannel shirt; but just as he was about to seize the other the male eagle dashed towards the tree, and struck at my daring friend a blow of his wing. Whitehead, far from losing his self-possession, drew his knife, and prepared to defend himself. He struck the eagle in the side, but the blow was not mortal, and the bird prepared to make another attack upon

the imprudent sportsman. I dared not fire, for fear of hurting my friend, but I stood ready to give my assistance if aid were possible. What I dreaded was, that Whitehead might lose his balance and fall into the lake, and my fears were partly realised, for, just as I was preparing to pull the trigger, the bird of Jove, with an evident intention to break the skull of its foe, struck at his head, and carried off—*not* a piece of flesh, but—my friend's wig.

The blow so staggered him that he must inevitably have fallen down into the lake, if he had not had a good strong branch to support him. Just at that moment, I levelled my gun, and broke the right wing of the lammergeyer so effectually, that after soaring in a circle, he fell right into the middle of the lake. Whitehead soon recovered himself, and came down the tree as quickly as possible, bringing with him the eaglet, which he had smothered during his fight with the enraged parent. We had great difficulty in getting down to the level of the lake, in whose midst the eagle had died, fighting furiously, as if it were the devil in holy water. I plunged into the lake, and after twenty strokes, caught hold of the wing of the eagle and towed it ashore. I write this very story with a quill from the left wing of that bird. As for poor Whitehead, though the wig saved him for the nonce, he died afterwards of a fit of apoplexy. That St. Hubert may take him into his special keeping is

the sincere wish of an old friend who has not forgotten him.

The eagle of the United States, like his European congeners, rarely lives alone, and, according to Audubon the celebrated naturalist (whose untimely death was an irreparable loss to science), the mutual attachment of a pair seems to last from their first union to the death of one or other. Eagles hunt together for their food, like pirates in partnership, and feed side by side with each other. Their connubial season begins in December, and is indicated by a considerable amount of noisiness on each side. You may see them on the flight together, whirling and circling in space, and screaming with their utmost force, playing, seemingly fighting, with each other, as if in joke, and then resting side by side on the branches of the tree where they have prepared their marriage bed, and which is, perhaps, only their old nest repaired. The female begins to lay about the beginning of January. The nest is made of sticks, a little more than a yard long, tuffets of grass, and pieces of moss and lichens. Its circumference is from five to six feet. The eggs which the female deposits in this rude house are two or three in number, very rarely four, and are of a greenish white, with a granular shell, and of equal dimensions at both ends. The hatching lasts from three to four weeks. When the eaglets are hatched, they are covered with a reddish down,

and the beak and claws are of a disproportionate length. The parents do not allow them to fly until their plumage is complete; but when that happens, they bring their progeny out without delay. The parents supply them during their early days with an abundance of all sorts of food, so that the borders of the nest are usually a mass of fragments of stinking flesh, bones, and ordure.

One evening in the month of February, I was returning from a long bout at trout-fishing in the Cumberland mountains, and, with two friends was journeying along a pass, below which, down in the valley, was a farm-house, where we intended staying. Presently, I pointed out to my companions the traces of a bird of prey. The peasant who accompanied us told me at once that there were eagles in the rocks, and he declared that he had seen them the evening before, but out of gun-shot. "The villains," said he, "they have eaten more of my master's fowls and lambs than they are worth dollars." On hearing this, I determined to seize the opportunity of studying the habits of the American eagle, and so we placed ourselves in ambush under a hollow of the rock, and remained there for some time. As we waited I had to impose silence upon the peasant, who continued to pour into our ears his account of the evil deeds of the eagles, and to objurgate the race in general. A Yankee friend who was of the party, assured me

that in the time of his grandfather, who had served under Washington, a child of two years old had been seized by an eagle in the State of Connecticut, and only owed his safety to the great difficulty which these birds experience in flying off from the level ground. The father of the babe was thus enabled to kill the marauder, by striking him with a cudgel. "Silence," cried I, "eagles can both hear and see from afar."

"Don't be afraid," replied our companion: "I'm on the look out, and when the eagles are in sight I'll not whisper a word."

Our loquacious friend was going on, to the intense disgust of myself and the other, when suddenly a sharp whistle was heard from the cornice of a rock not far from the spot where we lay hid. I put my hand over the Yankee's mouth, and looking upwards, discerned on the very brink of the precipice, surrounded by a number of twigs, two eaglets, whose flapping wings and piercing cries announced the approach of one of the parents, and then presently we could see a black spot in the sky, which came closer and closer until the shape became plain and perceptible against the blue sky. In a few moments the eagle perched lightly upon a rock close to the eaglets. He held in his claws a morsel of flesh, which he offered to his young, who were already well fledged and very bold. At that moment, when I put my head out to get a good view, the female

appeared in the distance and saw me at once; she uttered a scream of alarm, dropped the prey which she held in her grasp, and immediately the eaglets disappeared under the shelter of the rock. The male at once dashed away, but in a short time, informed by that instinct which no one can explain, that we had no firearms, they approached once more, wheeling over our heads, and uttering cries which sounded like menaces.

We made up our minds to return next day with our guns, but the weather was so unfavourable that we were unable to undertake the expedition until after a week. I took care to suggest to my companions the desirability of having a rope-ladder, and all the apparatus necessary for scaling the rock, and whilst some of the peasants climbed the precipice, the rest stood at the foot. Ten hours elapsed without anything being visible, and on examining the nest it was found vacant. The eagles, with their wonted sagacity, had not suffered the grass to grow under their feet, but had placed their offspring in a safer place, where they were not liable to human investigations.

During my stay at New York, I often amused myself with travelling by some of the numerous steamers which navigate the bay as far as Staten Island, and there, accompanied by my dog, I explored the path which leads to the basaltic rocks which border the ocean. I had found out, among

the numerous little islands about, a little isle of about a quarter of a mile each way, which was divided from the mainland by a gut, no wider than the Seine is at Paris, and half-dry at low tide. Here, in a little cottage, and about the year 1846, lived a young girl, of about twenty-two years old, a vigorous, masculine creature, with an expression gentle and stern at the same time, and a voice so sympathetic, that it reminded me of the warbling of an American thrush roosting over its young. Jessie (that was the name of my poor little cottage-girl who lived on the shore) had lost her mother, and her father was an infirm old man, who sat all day crouching in the chimney-corner smoking his pipe, and as quiet as the grave. Grief had well-nigh made him mad; but Jessie took care bravely of her four brothers, and thanks to the abundant fishing which was in the neighbourhood, to the eggs of the sea-birds, and to the wild deer which they trapped, there was never any want of food in the poor little home. The eldest of the boys was about twenty years old, and the youngest (who had been the innocent cause of his mother's death) was about fourteen. This little fellow, who was so small of his age that no one would have supposed him to be more than eight years old, was the pet of the family, and if ever the father had a smile for anyone, it was for him. Ben was not clever at fishing, or at cultivating the soil, or working in the

house, but he principally occupied himself with making garlands of sea-weed, plaiting rush mats, or picking up shells to make bracelets and necklaces for his sister. Frequently he was to be found lying under a rock behind the paternal hut, with his eyes fixed upon the white sails of some ship, or on the tide, watching the swarms of blue bream, bass, or vagabond bonitos. Sometimes, with the help of a jug, the child fished up the algæ, or sea-weeds, which the storms had torn up from the submerged pastures of the sea, and thrown up upon the shore. This was the only work which Ben could ever accustom himself to, and both his sister and brothers loved him so much that they could never find it in their hearts to reproach him for his instinctive idleness.

From the first time I saw him, Ben conceived a fondness for me, although he was usually very timid on the appearance of any stranger upon that desert shore. The second time I paid a visit to the island, he entreated me to spend a few days with him. I consented, and all the more readily, because Ben promised to show me plenty of fishes, birds, and animals of which I had no acquaintance.

And really the little fellow did not deceive me. He knew every habitat, and could climb up the rocks, and lay his hand upon the penguin's eggs without frightening the parent as she sat upon

them. Where I should have declared war, Ben brought peace.

One morning, the third day after my arrival at Jessie's hut, wishing to take advantage of a glorious sunny day and make a long excursion along the coast, I asked the girl where my young friend had gone to. She sought for him, called him by name, but he was nowhere to be found. I swept the country round with my telescope, but could find no trace of either Ben or his brothers. As I was determined not to remain indoors, I shouldered my gun, and whistled to my dog, but I had not gone twenty yards before I felt how I missed Ben in my solitary walk. Nevertheless, I pushed on, crossing waste lands and marshes, sometimes getting a shot at a wild duck, and sometimes at a snipe, making my way towards a group of rocks which raised themselves perpendicularly from the sea shore. I seemed, somehow, to be irresistibly attracted towards this place.

Suddenly I heard a lamentable cry, which was repeated by the echoes, and the cry was followed by a shrill but plaintive scream. Running rapidly round a point, I was almost stupefied by the spectacle which presented itself to my eyes. At the end of a rope, which was wound around the trunk of a stunted oak, poor little Ben hung over the abyss, oscillating in space, whilst a formidable eagle, with his claws and beak open, was preparing to dart upon

him. On seeing this I shuddered, and then I saw two of the brothers of reckless Ben pulling up the rope, whilst the third menaced the bird with a stick, without being able to reach him. I hardly knew what to do, for it seemed scarcely possible to fire without hitting Ben. I stood breathless and immoveable. Under his arms, the brave boy had secured two eaglets, but at the moment when the eagle attempted to peck at his face he dropped one. I stood a prey to an indescribable anguish, but from beneath my half-closed eyelids I could see the king of birds darting through the air to save its little one in its fall. Then I breathed again. The two lads tugged away at the rope with all their might, and Ben approached the brink of the precipice, whilst the eldest boy attacked the eagle with a volley of stones. Swift as lightning, the angry bird returned to the fight; but directly he saw the open beak of his foe, Ben let go the other eaglet and clung on, whilst his brothers drew him up towards them. At that moment I let fly with both barrels, and stretched the eagle dead at my feet, holding its little one in its claws.

Not many moments afterwards I held the little bird's-nester in my arms, and was scolding him for having exposed his life for me; for it was with no other motive than to offer me a trophy that Ben and his brothers had sallied forth at dawn, without saying a word to anybody about the exploit which

they contemplated. To complete the story, I may add, that I wished to recover the eaglet which Ben had first of all let go, so re-loading my gun and slinging it over my shoulder, I got upon the rope (having previously knotted it at intervals) and let myself quietly down to the eagle's nest. The eaglet was lying in the middle of the nest, and I easily got possession of it.

The eagle's nest was built upon the brow of the rock, a mass of branches, briars, &c., about five or six feet long, completely surrounded by stinking offal of every description and whitened bones. The eagle that I had killed measured twelve feet from wing to wing, and was a female.

Three days afterwards, I lay in ambush near the empty nest of the eagles, waiting for the male, who did not make his appearance. It may be that he had been killed, or it may be that, having witnessed the destruction of his wife and children, he had prudently resolved to keep his distance. I carried the two eaglets to Staten Island and gave them to Mr. Blanchard, the landlord of the hotel on that oasis of New York. One of them died after a few weeks, in spite of all the care which was taken of him; the other was a fat and healthy bird in 1849, when I quitted the United States, and displayed himself upon his perch, in the garden of the hotel, in true convict's dress, for he was chained by the

leg and riveted to the bole of the tree which gave him shelter.

In all probability, the Staten Island eagle is now dead, whether of the liver complaint which usually attacks his race, or of pining away, or of sheer rage and vexation.

THE WILD HORSE.

During my stay in the United States, I visited the prairies twice, and lived among the Red Indians. It was on the occasion of my second journey across the American desert that we found ourselves one morning, in the month of October, 1848, among a chain of steep and barren mountains, amid which flowed a stream like a chain of silver. It was full of fish, and the banks were of turf, enamelled with flowers. In the distance, on the brow of the mountain which overlooked the valley, were trees whose foliage was fresh and bright, whose boles were covered with emerald moss, and on which the eye rested with pleasure, for they contrasted with the monotony of the vast solitudes which we had traversed, after quitting the marshy banks of the Mississippi. You might have taken it for an English garden, designed by the ablest of English horticulturists.

In the distance, we perceived a troop of wild

horses,* browsing peacefully near a herd of about twenty bisons, some of whom were lying in a thicket of cotton plants, whilst the others mounted guard. One might have supposed that we were looking upon the stud of a wealthy English horse-breeder.

The chief of the Red Skins assembled all the best hunters of his tribe, and held a council with

* The race of wild horses which now exists in America has been introduced by Europeans, for it is descended from the horses that mounted the cavalry of Cortez. It is a race of pure blood therefore, for the Spanish horses were descended from the Arabs. In the early ages of colonisation, these animals fetched a high price. Antonio Herrara tells us, that at Chili a horse was worth a thousand piastres; and Garcilesso de la Vega states, that one of these animals was as good as a fortune in Peru, and that a father left one to his son, just as he would bestow upon him three or four thousand piastres. In the beginning of the present century, however, the race had increased so much in America, that the Spaniards remounted their cavalry with wild horses, worth, on an average, two piastres each.

At the present day, the wild horse is to be found in innumerable herds on the pampas of Central America, on the sierras of New Mexico, and on the wastes of Texas. As a proof of their immense numbers, Azara declares that during a long drought which prevailed over all the pampas, a thousand carcases were found in a single spot on the banks of the Parana; they had been attracted thither through thirst, and at the sight of the water they fell into a state of madness, which drove them to attack each other in a species of mortal struggle.

Among the wild horses, we discover the same difference of skin which may be noticed among the cultivated animal. They are not large creatures, but they are very strong, and are endowed with a vigour of which Europeans have no idea. They perform the longest journeys without fatigue; only care must be taken to keep them going all through the day. At night, they may be turned adrift in the forest, but a little before dawn they must be put in harness again, and fed with maize and water. They will then go on all day, without either eating or drinking, until they reach the locality where the camp is to be pitched, when they receive again a feed of water and maize. The

them. He was determined to carry out that grand manœuvre which is known in the United States and among the emigrants of the Far West as the "Wild Horses' Ring." This style of sporting requires a large number of able horsemen, who, spreading themselves about, formed a circle of about a mile and a half in circumference.

Absolute silence is necessary, for wild horses are easily frightened, and their instinct is so acute that the slightest breeze will carry to their nostrils the scent of their enemies, the Red Skins of the desert. As soon as the circle was formed, four hunters, mounted on splendid horses, started in the direction of the herd. Immediately, every animal started off in the opposite direction; but, as soon as they attempted to pass over the boundaries of the circle,

brutes thrive remarkably well under this treatment. It is thought to be harmful to feed them during the day; and when they cross a river, care is taken to keep their heads up, so as to prevent them from drinking.

The mode of driving horses in America enables them to perform a long journey without feeling fatigued. The American regards it as beneficial to make a horse trot. The pace is a kind of amble, and consists in lifting the feet only so high that the hinder hoofs just graze the earth, and the animal cannot be injured by the pressure of the saddle. The couriers of the embassy perform every month the journey from Mexico to Vera Cruz, going and coming in twenty-four hours. The distance is sixty-three geographical miles.

The manner in which the gauchos ride the wild horse, in order to pass rivers, is very curious. When they perceive that the animal has lost his footing, they slip off and hold on by the tail. The brute wishes to regain the shore, but the gaucho throws water in his eyes. The horse then turns about, and swims to the opposite bank.

the nearest hunter dashed onwards to meet them, and frightened them back again.

My readers may perhaps understand the nature of this sport, which the pen is quite inadequate to describe. Nothing is grander than to see these horses at full gallop, rushing in every direction, and whinnying with such clearness and suddenness that the echoes have scarcely time to take up the burden without hearing it repeated. The Pawnees, who entertained me, attached the baggage horses to stakes, so as to keep them from running away, and to prevent them from being misled by bad example. Fifty Red Skins, with the chief of the tribe at the head, crept along the border of the wood which lined the hill to the left, leading their horses after them. A similar number of men went to the right, on the other side of the stream; whilst a third party, making an immense circuit, lay in ambush on a parallel line near the lower end of the valley, with a view to a junction of the two wings, so as to inclose the herd of wild horses in the centre. This difficult manœuvre was executed with extraordinary facility, and the third line was just about to unite itself with the two others when the herd gave symptoms of alarm. The neighings of the horses became more frequent; they breathed heavily, and looked anxiously around. Presently they broke out into a trot, behind a clump of cotton bushes, which hid them from our sight.

The chief of the Pawnees happened to retreat to the spot where the scene which I narrate took place, and he advanced slowly to the animals, in order to drive them back, when the three Americans who accompanied me broke out of the cover and advanced towards the horses. This clumsy movement upset all the plans of the Red Skins. Immediately they perceived the men, the wild horses dashed off into the valley, pursued by the three Americans, who were shouting like men possessed. It was in vain for the Pawnees, who formed the middle line, to attempt to stop the fugitives and make them turn back. The animals, so hotly pursued, broke through the line and escaped into the open plain. On seeing this, the Red Skins raised their war-whoop, and spurred their horses to a gallop.

The bisons, who up to this time had been peaceably grazing in the prairie, seemed now to hold a consultation together, and looking with an air of astonishment at the human avalanche which came pouring towards them, they took flight at a rapid pace, galloping towards a marsh which was at the foot of the valley. As for the horses, they fled along the narrow defile through the mountains, and disappeared pell-mell in a cloud of dust. The three Americans and about fifty Pawnees were on the heels of the wild horses, but none of them could use the *lasso* with any success. I must here confess my own incompetence as a horseman, and I

admit that I was one of the laggards, although I was mounted on a capital mare, with an Indian saddle as comfortable and easy as an arm chair. My feet were securely bound to the large Mexican stirrups, so that I was quite secure from falling.

Among the animals in the herd I had remarked a magnificent stallion, as black as a raven's wing, and I pursued him in company with two young Pawnees who acted as attendants upon the chief of the tribe. As we mounted the defile the stallion slipped and fell, and, in a moment, the two Red Skins leapt from their horses and seized the creature by his mane and nostrils. The stallion struggled vigorously, beating the earth with his fore feet and ploughing it up behind with his hoofs; but, in spite of all his efforts, my two companions succeeded in passing the lasso around his neck and in fixing him by the right fore foot to a leathern thong which was attached to the left hind foot.

Whilst the other Indian hunters, and the three Americans pursued the remainder of the herd, I returned to camp with the black stallion and his two conquerors, who had attached a second rope to the lasso, and so held the brute between them at a sufficient distance to prevent him from injuring them by his kicking. Directly he went towards one side, they tugged him towards the other, and by this means, when arrived at the camp, if not vanquished, he was fairly tired out.

The Pawnees brought back four colts and a mare. Two of the former were bays, and the two others white; the mare was as black as jet. Next morning, the six animals seemed to understand perfectly the necessity of submission, and had become as docile as others who had lived for years in the camp of the Pawnees.

The capture of a wild horse is a feat which is esteemed above all others among the Red Skins of every tribe. The animals who live in freedom on those vast plains are of different shapes and colours, and it is not difficult to distinguish their origin. Some of them resemble the English breeds, and these are probably the descendants of horses which escaped from the English colonies before the declaration of Independence in 1776. The smaller and more sinewy horses are doubtless descended from the Andalusian breed, which were brought thither by Cortez and the Spanish colonists after the Mississippi and the neighbouring territories were taken possession of by Hernandes de Soto.

On the evening after this grand hunt we were sitting around our fires, with which we had cooked our supper. Two blankets were spread upon the ground, and an enormous bowl of maple wood was before us filled with a stew composed of wild turkeys and slices of peccary hams. Several haunches of wild venison, roasted upon wooden spits, were browning before the fire, which sputtered and

smoked with the grease which dropped into it. We had neither plates nor forks, and every one helped himself with the aid of his knife, cutting slices from the venison which he seasoned from a little bowl filled with a mixture of salt and pepper.

Here I must offer a compliment to the Pawnee cook. The stew and roasts, seasoned by the air of the prairie, seemed to me superior to anything I had ever tasted at Vefour's. Our only drink was coffee boiled in a cauldron, sweetened with brown sugar, and served in tin cups. When night came on, the camp wore a picturesque appearance. Scattered fires sparkled in the forest, and around them you could see groups of Indians, some seated, others lying at full length and wrapped up in their blankets. For my part, I took a pleasure in listening to the tales of the Pawnees who surrounded me—tales which beguiled the monotony of the scene. The Indians have plenty of legends, and their superstitious veneration for the beauties of Nature surpasses all that the ingenuity of a European can invent. One of them assured us that the hunters sometimes found thunder-bolts in the prairies, and that they made the best points for arrows and lances. A warrior furnished with those is invincible, but he is all the more subject to the danger of electricity. If a storm comes on during a fight, he may be reduced to powder. This, however, is but a fable.

I heard a great many anecdotes about a certain

black horse that frequented the prairies of Arkansas for a number of years, defying every attempt of the hunters to catch him. The fame of him was known afar. He was thought to be impossible of capture, and his feet were lighter than the gazelle, and the mane which fell upon his graceful crest, was as black as ebony. One of the Pawnees told us that one evening, before the moon was up, he approached very near to the enchanted horse, and threw his lasso. The noble brute seemed to resign himself at first, and galloped by the side of his captor; but, suddenly perceiving the camp fires, he shied off vigorously, disentangled himself from the lasso, and rushed full into the obscurity of the night.

The horses captured by the Pawnees are the objects of especial attention. It may interest the reader to know something of the means employed by the Red Skins to conquer these noble animals. In the first place, they set upon the horse's back a construction composed of two pieces of wood, lightly attached to each other, so as to give it its first idea of servitude. The haughty independence of the animal is then immediately manifested, but after an unequal struggle, in which the Indian aids, the poor horse, feeling resistance to be useless, lies down and confesses himself to be vanquished. An actor, hoping to represent the despair of a monarch, could not render the position more dramatically.

The second lesson consists in making the animal

get up by the pressure of the bridle. At first, the horse refuses to obey; then he lays down at full length; but, presently, on the reiterated pressure of the bridle, and the sting of the whip, he springs neighing to his feet and places his head between his two fore legs. Then he is entirely vanquished, and after making him submit for two or three days to these humiliations of slavery, he is set free among the horses who submit themselves to the rein or saddle. I could not help admiring the splendid animals thus trained by the Pawnees, and whose life is changed from freedom to a miserable slavery. Instead of ranging the boundless pastures at their will, wandering from prairie to prairie, and from mountain to plain, browsing upon every kind of flower and grass, and quenching their thirst at every brook, they are condemned to a perpetual servitude, to the humiliation of bridle and bit.

Is there not a strange similarity between this transition and the lot of some of the human race? One day a monarch, the next a prisoner. So, one day the noble horse is monarch of the prairies, and the next, he is harnessed to a dung-cart.

TURKEYS.

Before my adventurous excursions among the Red Skins in the American wilderness, I had only seen wild turkeys (*Meleagris fera*) in the shops of New York, hung up in the basket of some dealer in fowls, or slung upon the back of some Yankee farmer who brought his game to market. I well knew that the turkey was the most valued game in North America, but I had never got within gun-shot of him. To accomplish that, it was necessary to shoot over the States of Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois or Indiana, the very centre of the States; to sport along the banks of the Missouri and the Mississippi, the greatest rivers of the American continent; or in Georgia, or the two Carolinas, in the midst of the Alleghany Mountains, where it is difficult to approach the bird, seeing that they live in the wildest spots, in the midst of unapproachable ravines, and in forest fastnesses where man seldom penetrates.

One morning, during my stay with a tribe of Red Skins, one of my companions was informed that a flock of turkeys had been perceived by an Indian on the border of a little clump of cotton plants not far from where we had pitched our tents. To start for the spot was the affair of a moment. The Red Skin advised us to keep the most profound

silence, and set us the example himself; for he walked so lightly over the soil which was covered with leaves and twigs, that you might have supposed he had wings on his feet. After circling round and round in the natural paths formed by the cotton plants, we came upon some tufts of what is called buffalo grass, which grows about a foot high, and in the midst were strutting about in thorough enjoyment of themselves, about twenty magnificent turkeys.* The delight with which, from under cover, I examined this novel kind of game, can only be understood by a true sportsman. My two pointers were full of impatience; their eyes seemed to start from their heads, and their noses dilated at the scent of the game which they had smelt. We looked at each other, to determine what we ought to do. Should we fire our four barrels on the flock, or walk straight on to meet the turkeys, scatter them among the underwood, and then take them singly, after the European fashion. We made up our minds for the latter course, and started our dogs

* This is one of the most splendid of the North American birds, and is also the fattest and the best eating. The Jesuit missionaries, whose work was to spread the light of the Catholic faith among the Indian tribes, imported this fowl into France. A vulgar error attributes the origin of the bird to India, and thence the name *d'Inde*. At that time, America was called by Columbus and other navigators, *Western India*, and it is from this India, and not from that which is watered by the Ganges, that this monarch of our poultry yards comes to us.

after them. At first, the turkeys looked at us coming on without budging an inch; they only ceased their play and seemed upon the watch. When we had reached to within fifty yards of the flock, one of the largest birds uttered a cry, which was the signal for a general dispersion: we fired, and three birds were bagged. Our dogs immediately dashed in pursuit of the birds, which were scattered in all directions, but we recalled them with a whistle; and whilst we were reloading, the Red Skin fastened our three victims together by the feet and threw them across his shoulders.

The wind was from the north, but the air was warm and genial, so we determined to hunt our game against the wind, so as to have a better chance of approaching it. We passed on to the right without losing a moment, and advanced towards the nearest lot of turkeys. They had flown about a hundred and fifty yards, and then trotted off rapidly towards the deep grass. On coming up to the spot where we had seen them disappear, our dogs recovered the scent; but although they hunted diligently they could not recover the quarry. There was a thick clump of arbutus and brambles about twelve feet high, which seemed to bother the dogs. After standing there some time, the Red Skin approached and said, in his picturesque language, "The black bird is cunning, and wishes to deceive the pale-face. He has got upon wooden legs, so as to leave no foot-

steps behind. Look among the trees, and see if you can't find the crafty ones."

So it was. The turkeys had perched among the low branches of the thicket and were grouped up together, like fowls in a coop. They were all snuggled up, with their heads drawn down between their shoulders, as if waiting for the danger to pass by. The two dogs dashed into the covert, and apparently forgetting their education as pointers, endeavoured to drive the game. The whole pack took to flight at once, leaving six upon the ground. Three more were soon struggling in the agonies of death, and two others were speedily disposed of. Thenceforward I understood that no game is more easily killed than a turkey. His enormous bulk, the heaviness of his flight, all contribute to render him a bird which falls an easy victim to the sportsman; only if he be not mortally struck and his wings only are broken, the turkey, instead of losing time, as most game birds do, by showing fight upon the ground, takes to his legs, and his movements are so rapid that, unless you have a very good dog indeed, he will make good his escape. If the turkey be struck upon the head, neck or breast, he is killed upon the spot, but if he be hit in the middle of the back, he can almost invariably get away. Dogs will follow the scent of the turkey for at least a mile. I have seen American dogs that have been trained to this sport, hunting in silence at their master's signal, but

when they caught sight of the birds, they would bark furiously, with the obvious intention of frightening them, and making them take flight in different directions. When a flock has been scattered in this manner, the sportsman has only to begin with the first, and then he takes the whole flock, one after another. Turkeys generally live in the green Savannahs which border the woods. In the morning and evening they frequent marsh lands which are covered with thick vegetation, among which they scratch up the soil in search of worms and insects; but in the middle of the day and during the night they retire under cover of the forest to sleep and perch upon the trees. When thus situated, it is very difficult to find them, for they remain motionless, and seem to belong to the branch on which they are sitting. As a general rule, if the bird is in a crouching position, it is asleep, and the sportsman may approach without fear; but if it sits upright, it is on the watch, and will fly off on the slightest noise, when it is very difficult to find it again. Turkeys are often hunted in America by moonlight, when they are perched upon the trees. The report of a gun does not frighten them then, and a whole flock may be killed easily.

One morning when I was shooting in the State of Missouri, walking along a row of carob trees, a kind of gobbling sound attracted my attention. I advanced on tip-toe, and soon discovered, on the

branch of a dead tree, a magnificent turkey-hen, which was clucking with great volubility. The bird was not more than fifteen paces from me, and I was just going to fire when a chorus of chattering from the left, informed me that there were several males replying to the call of the female. In a short time, I discovered among the tall grass about twenty turkeys making their way towards me. I fired, and had the satisfaction of bagging six enormous birds, some killed stone-dead, and the others wounded so that they could not fly. Will the reader believe me when I tell him that the unharmed cocks refused to make their escape for some time, and that I was able to knock over four more with the butt end of my gun before quitting the spot.

A friend of mine, who has travelled through Arkansas on horseback, told me that on one occasion, he shot a hen turkey with a pistol, as she was crouching upon the ground, and that on going to take her up, he found that she was sitting upon a nest with fourteen poults under her, scarcely twenty-four hours old. The poor mother had neglected her own safety to save the lives of her young.

A farmer of the United States complained, and not without reason, of the depredations caused on his fields of Indian corn by a flock of turkeys, who seemed to defy all methods of intimidation, and even powder and shot. He adopted the following

plan of coping with them:—A large trench was dug, the bottom of which was plentifully strewn with Indian corn. He then loaded a blunderbuss to the muzzle, and placed it in such a position that it swept the whole trench. A string was fastened to the trigger, so that the blunderbuss could be fired at a favourable moment, and the farmer placed himself behind a thicket near at hand. The turkeys were not long in discovering the maize at the bottom of the trench, and soon pecked it up, but without abating their depredations upon the neighbouring fields. The farmer renewed the supply several times, until at last the birds had accustomed themselves to seek their food in this place. One evening, about sunset, the farmer thought that the opportune moment had arrived for firing off his *infernal machine*. Crouching on his stomach, he lay in wait, with the string in his hand which was attached to the trigger of the blunderbuss. He pulled, and an explosion took place, followed by a fearful noise, caused by the screams of the dying birds and the flight of those who were escaping from the tragic scene. Forty-three victims were found lying on the ground at the bottom of the trench,—some dead, others fluttering about in their last agony. The Yankee farmer told me that he salted thirty-five of these turkeys and found them very useful during the winter; and the survivors were so alarmed by what had taken place that his crop of

Indian corn next year was greatly improved by the occurrence.

Turkeys are entrapped sometimes in the States by means of bird-calls. These instruments are made of little bones, cut in a certain fashion, and attached to a little leather bag filled with horse-hair. A sound may be obtained from them closely resembling the cry of the hen turkey. The males reply to this, flock to the spot, and fall easy victims. The Americans have a mode of killing turkeys which ought to be mentioned; it is a kind of trap. When there are plenty of turkeys in a wood, a sort of cage is constructed about the spot which they usually affect. It is made of branches of trees interlaced, so that, although the light can pass through, it forms an impenetrable barrier. This cage is carefully hollowed out beneath, and all the herbage is removed from the ground. One of the extremities of the hollow is closed, but the other offers a free passage of three feet in height, and of the form of a pointed arch. At intervals, the sides of the cage are tied to each other by means of perches. When the trap is complete, the ground underneath is thickly strewn with Indian corn, and a train of this grain is laid through the arched passage to the outside of the trap. The turkeys soon discover the grain, and, as they pick it up, find their way through the entrance into the trap. Once in, they cannot find their way out again, and sometimes the fortu-

nate trapper will find a score of turkeys at his mercy without ever drawing a trigger. I should add, as a set-off to this picture, that it occasionally happens that foxes, lynxes, or other beasts of prey precede the trapper in his visit to the cage, in which case he finds nothing but a few feathers and some half-gnawed bones.

I will close this article on the American turkey with an account of one of the best day's sport that, in my opinion, ever took place among the savannahs of the New World. A friend and myself had been spending six weeks with the Red Skins, when one morning an Indian announced to a chief of the tribe that he had met, about five miles distant from the camp, a flock of turkeys, which consisted of about two hundred birds. Although the Red Skins usually hold the flesh of this bird in small estimation, and only hunt it with snares, the desire of the chief to do what was agreeable to the pale-faces who were his guests made him resolve to give immediate orders, so as not to lose the opportunity of procuring for us one pleasure the more.

In half an hour, the whole tribe was afoot and on their way towards the spot where the Indian had seen the turkeys. At a distance of about half a mile from the place, the tribe divided into two parties, one of which went towards the north and the other southwards. It was a strange sight to see these two hundred and eighty Red Skins walking in

file, their bodies half bent; so that their heads were no higher than the herbage through which they pursued their silent way. Presently we heard the clucking and gobbling of the cock birds, which told us that the turkeys were aware of us. The flock was, in fact, close to us, and when the chief of the Red Skins gave the signal of attack with his war-whoop, the whole tribe rushed forward upon the quarry with shrill and guttural cries. In a moment, the whole flock of turkeys rose before us, pursued by the Indians, who never stopped until the birds had alighted. This manœuvre was repeated five times, until, finally, the weary birds could no longer fly, but trotted before us slowly, limping along upon their legs and wings, whilst the Red Skins caught them by the neck and knocked them over.

On returning to camp, we counted over the proceeds of the day's sport before the chief's tent, and there were a hundred and sixty turkeys heaped up together. The remainder of the flock had escaped from this fatal steeple-chase by concealing themselves in the grass and allowing the pursuing crowd to pass by.

THE COYOTE, OR WOLF.

Among the most rapacious and dangerous of the animals of North America, the wolf (*Canis ochropus*), commonly called the coyote in some of the Southern States, is as much dreaded by the trappers as either the panther or the grisly bear. Wolves are much more numerous in the United States than they are in Europe, and are of more formidable aspect than those of the Old World. In the distant glades of the forest, and in the neighbourhood of farms and villages, the wolf is to be met with foaming and growling, a strange compound of cowardice and audacity.

It is not easy to snare these wolves, but they may be hunted with dogs and horses. Their fur is of a reddish shade, dull, and mixed with grey and black. This is their ordinary colour; but, as in the case of other animals, there are varieties. Their tufted tail, black at end, is a little more than a third longer than the remainder of their bodies. They are like the dogs which frequent the wigwams of the Indians, which are certainly descended from this species. They are to be found all through the regions which lie between the Mississippi and the Pacific Ocean, and in the south of Mexico. They hunt in herds

like jackals, and run down deer, bisons, and other animals which they hope to overcome. They dare not attack the bisons when the latter are in a body, but they follow them at a distance, in the hope that a laggard will drop off—a young calf, or it may be a very old and feeble bull,—when they rush upon their prey and tear it to pieces. They follow hunting and travelling parties, taking possession of abandoned encampments and devouring all they find in them. Sometimes they will enter a camp during the night, and will seize the food which the travellers intended to breakfast upon next morning. These wolves are the most numerous of the North American carnivora; and, on account of their numbers, they suffer severely from hunger. Then, indeed, and then only, they will eat fruits and vegetables, merely to preserve themselves from starvation. The coyote is destitute of every feeling of sympathy, and therefore he inspires none; yet I heard an anecdote, which goes to prove that this forest ruffian is capable of a certain amount of sensibility,—nervous, at any rate, if not of the heart. This story was told me whilst I was hunting with the Pawnee Indians.

During the earlier times of colonising Kentucky, the coyotes were so numerous in the southern prairies of that State, that the inhabitants dared not leave their dwellings unless armed to the teeth. Women and children were compelled to stay at

home. The coyotes of this part of the country were of the species which has a dark grey fur, a kind which is very abundant in the northern districts, and in the dense forests and unexplored mountain districts of the Green River. A spot near Henderson, which is situate on the left bank of the Ohio, close to its junction with the Green River, was the locality most frequented by these four-footed marauders. The pigs, sheep, and cattle of the planters paid a heavy tribute to these voracious brutes. Many a time, when the snow was on the ground and the flocks remained under cover, the famished brutes would attack men; and many a belated farmer, coming home at night, found himself surrounded by the ravenous herd, from whose jaws he had the greatest difficulty in defending himself.

The adventure which I am about to relate happened to one Dick, an old negro fiddler, who was what is commonly termed "a good-for-nothing darkie." This old fellow had no other merit than a talent for scraping the fiddle,—a talent, however, which, poor as it may have been in my eyes, was of value in those of the coloured population, and even of the whites, for fifty miles around. In all that district, there never was a jollification without Dick being invited. Marriages, christenings, and those long evening festivities which they called *break-downs* in the States, could not take place without the aid of his violin. Wherever Dick appeared, with his

fiddle under his arm, wrapped up in his ragged old handkerchief, and his knotted cudgel under his arm, he was welcome.

Old Dick was the *property* of one of the Hendersons, a family which gave its name to that district of Kentucky. His master was very fond of him, on account of his obedient and original disposition, so that instead of making him work on the soil, he was free to wander about as he pleased. Nobody complained of this tolerance, for Dick was, as his master called him, a "necessary evil," and he had the talent of keeping all the other niggers on the plantation in good humour with the help of his violin.

Dick, who understood all the importance of his functions, was celebrated for the punctuality of his attendance whenever he was informed that any one had need of his services. On this point he was so particular, that any hindrance rendered him extremely angry. In spite of that natural timidity which characterises people of genius, Dick had a tinge of the savage in his composition when anything at a festival fell short of his ideas of etiquette. Once, however, poor Dick was late; but the story will show that it was not his fault that he did not keep his appointment.

A wedding among some people of colour was to take place at a plantation about six miles distant from our fiddler's cabin. Dick had been invited, and appointed master of the ceremonies. It was winter;

the cold was excessive, and the snow, which had fallen for three days without cessation, covered the ground for several feet in depth.

Whilst all Mr. Henderson's slaves were hastening, with their master's permission, to the scene where pleasure awaited them, the black Apollo was completing his toilet with scrupulous and unusual care. A white shirt, with a collar of preposterous proportions, long in front and elevated behind, made friend Dick's head wear the appearance of a block of coal wrapped up in a sheet of white paper. In addition to this, he had a blue coat, with gilt buttons, and long tails reaching down to his heels—a cast-off garment of his master—a red silk neck-tie with a fringe at the ends, a green and orange waistcoat, boots which had seen better days, and a kind of brigand's hat; such was the costume of Dick, "the old darkie fiddler," and when he was dressed, he thought himself as handsome as Adonis.

Casting a final look at his personal appearance in the scrap of mirror which was fastened to the wall by three nails, and bestowing upon himself a smile which testified his unmitigated satisfaction, Dick took his fiddle under his arm and started upon his journey.

The moon shone brightly overhead, and the stars (to borrow the poetic expression of our fiddler) were like gilt nails stuck into the ceiling of heaven by some upholsterer; not a sound could be heard,

except the crunching of the snow which Dick trod under his feet. The road he had to traverse was very narrow, and its tortuous windings were across a forest which the axe had not yet invaded. It was only a footpath, for there was no road capable of accommodating a carriage for miles around. Reflecting on the reproaches which awaited him for his tardiness, and regretting the time spent in polishing the splendid buttons of his coat, and drawing out his collars to the required length, Dick marched on at the top of his speed, without taking notice of certain black shadows which dogged his footsteps through the forest. They were the wolves, the terrible coyotes, who followed him at a distance, uttering barks and snarls of which Dick took no heed. Soon, however, he was compelled to pay attention to the scene which was going on behind him. He had accomplished about half his journey, and through the arches of the trees he could just see the clearing on which the house stood, where he was expected. The angry snarls of the beasts of prey had been increasing during the last quarter of an hour, and the sound of their paws, under which the snow crackled, inspired the poor old man with an indescribable dread. The number of the brutes seemed to increase as he advanced.

It is the habit of the wolf to hesitate before attacking a man; they examine their ground and watch for a propitious moment. Dick knew his

foes too well to run away from them, for that would have been the signal for a general attack. The only chance of escape was to get to the borders of the forest; for the wolves were not likely to quit the shelter of the trees. He knew moreover that in the middle of the clearing was a deserted cabin, and he hoped to gain its shelter. The wolves grew bolder every moment, and to whatever side the unfortunate negro turned he saw glaring eyes menacing him in every direction. Having no stick, the poor fellow resolved to try the effect of his fiddle, and at the first stroke of his bow upon the strings, the wolves darted back, surprised by the unaccustomed music. In this manner, poor Dick was able to reach the clearing, and gain the shelter of the cabin, for directly he touched the strings, the wolves drew back. In spite of his having reached the clearing, however, the wolves gave chase, but fortunately he got to the cabin before they overtook him, and he was able to push to and bolt the door and mount up into the roof. Here he was comparatively secure from danger, albeit some of the wolves had gained admission into the cabin and were endeavouring, with all their might, to reach the legs of the unfortunate fiddler.

In spite of all his woes, Dick had not abandoned his fiddle, which had rendered him such good service in the forest. Grasping his bow with a firm hold, he struck a treble chord which could be heard

over all the yelping of the wolves and reduced them to silence, as if by magic. The silence endured for some time, interrupted only by the sounds produced upon the violin by the agitated fingers of the poor old fiddler. This continued for some time, and as long as the sound of the violin could be heard, the wolves kept their distance. By this means, he managed to keep them at bay, until the *convives*, anxious for the safety of their old friend and unable to guess what it was that had delayed a man usually so exact, sallied forth in quest of him, and at length discovered him in the situation I have described.

At the first appearance of the niggers, the wolves seemed to think it high time to decamp, and the poor fiddler, stupefied with fright and cold, fell fainting into the arms of his deliverers.

THE OPOSSUM.

A Gascon who was very fond of jesting and whom I knew well in the States, told me that one day when he was walking in the forest, he met an opossum (*Didelphys virginiana*). Struck with the odd appearance of the brute he threw the stick at him which he held in his hand; "the rascal," said he, telling me the story, "stopped short, just as if my stick had broken

his back, and I slipped him into my pocket, quite pleased at not having to go home empty-handed. At any rate, thought I, here's a dish for dinner. But Lord! didn't he give me a grip in the hinder part of my breeches. I pulled him out and gave him a rap that would have felled an ox. 'Will that settle you,' said I, 'you little brute?' And with that, I threw him over my shoulder. But Lord! the confounded little brute was not satisfied yet, for he nearly bit my ear off. This time I caught him by the ribs, and I could hear them crack again. Then taking him by his tail, I tried to carry him by that. But Lord! he curled himself round and bit my fingers. Then I had had quite enough of him and let him go; and believe me or not as you like, I'd rather be hung from the highest yard-arm in Bordeaux harbour, than pick up another opossum again."

I had heard a great deal about the opossum,* and was rather curious about him. I had been told that, when surprised by the trapper and he sees that flight is impossible, he employs stratagem and will

* This quadruped, which is peculiar to North America, belongs to the family of the *Didelphidæ*. To look at it, you would think at first that it is almost utterly devoid of instinct; but you subsequently discover that, on the contrary, it has all the tricks of the fox and more quite at its command. The female opossum has a pouch, in which her young take refuge in time of danger, and within which are the breasts that give them food. Another peculiarity about the anatomical structure of this animal is, that the first toe of each foot has no nail, and is separated from the others like the thumb from the fingers in the human hand, whilst all the others are furnished with long sharp nails.

pretend to be as dead as if he had been mortally struck by a bullet. If, by chance, believing him to be dead, you look aside carelessly or throw your game-bag by, the opossum chooses a propitious moment and is beyond your reach when you least expect it. This dodge of the creature has given rise to a common expression in the United States: "playing 'possum," or "'possuming," signifying what we call "shamming dead." I have been told that on getting a tap on the side of the head which would scarcely kill a musquito, he will stretch out his limbs as stiff as if he were a corpse on a dissecting table. In this situation you may pull him and pinch him as you please, but not a muscle will move; his eyes look as dull as if they were covered with dust (for the opossum has no eyelids) and even if a dog bites him he will not stir. But let him alone for a minute and he will reopen his half-shut eye, and on the first favourable opportunity will take French leave of you in the most rapid manner possible.

During my sporting trips I never came within gun-shot of an opossum, until one day a planter of Louisiana told me that the plantation around his house was filled with opossums. "Sometimes," said he, "when the moon is up, my niggers take a wretched old dog with a capital scent, who guides them to the tree where the opossums have taken refuge; a torch of resin is immediately lit, and the blacks begin to cut down the tree on which the

opossums are concealed. While this is going on, the poor brutes seem to joke, sing, laugh and chatter in the most indescribable manner. Presently, the tree gives way, and at this moment, which the opossums are quite unable to understand, they jump out to the end of the branches. In a minute, crash! comes the tree and the opossums with it, sometimes falling under the very grip of the dog. Even should he escape for the moment, the dog is soon upon him, and, if he shams dead, the negro who picks him up does not forget to add a little reality to the fiction."

I laughed at my host's stories about opossum hunting, but he told me that I was wrong to dismiss lightly so interesting a subject, and he offered to convince me by actual experience that it was not so ridiculous as it seemed to be in the telling. I accepted his proposition at once, and he gave orders for everything to be in readiness for the sport by the close of the day.

It was pitch dark when we started, and I very naturally observed that this would render it all the more difficult for us to see the game. He replied that, on the contrary, that would make it all the more easy. I had no reply to make, so I contented myself with an inward protest, and with allowing myself to be led onwards.

We travelled in an American waggon, drawn by a powerful horse, and the benches accommodated the

whole party, the opossum hunter, two friends and myself. We soon arrived in the midst of a thick wood, through which, preceded by a tall negro, who held a lighted torch in his hand, we made our way in silence. The two dogs who accompanied us, soon finding the scent of the opossum, gave tongue and rushed onwards, leading the way to the foot of an oak which looked a likely lair for the game we were after.—I must confess, however, that I was very curious to know how the opossum hunter prepared to get at his prey. We had no axes to cut down the tree, and the darkness was so intense that the light of the torch, instead of illuminating the space over our heads, only served to render the obscurity more conspicuous. The negro who preceded us, having stuck his torch into the ground, heaped up an enormous quantity of brushwood and dead twigs within about twenty feet of the tree, and having set a light to it, placed himself so as to put the trunk of the tree between his body and the heat of the fire. I sat down by his side, awaiting the result of these mysterious preparations. The pile soon began to blaze, and, in a short time, when our eyes had grown accustomed to the glare, we could distinguish the branches of the oak as readily as if they stood in relief upon an illuminated horizon.—"Ha!" cried our opossum hunter, "Now we have him! Look up there, at that branch. Surely it moves; what can it be?" At the word, he fired,

and cut off—— a large bunch of twigs, which the negro picked up laughing. "Never mind," cried my friend, reloading his gun, and, without paying the slightest attention either to the laughter of the black or the smile I had upon my face, he recommenced his examination of the branches of the tree. Twice again did he fire off his gun ineffectually; but, after the third shot, a prolonged growl proceeding from an object which fell upon the ground before us, was succeeded by a loud hurrah. An enormous opossum was struggling in the agonies of death, and the negro, having delicately seized him by the tail, relit the torch at the dying embers of the pile, and we soon made our way back to the house, where, around a capital fire and cheered by a good supper and some delicious champagne, we congratulated our skilful host upon his important discovery in hunting opossums.

During my stay at Philadelphia in 1845, I met with a certain Mr. David Crockett, an original genius, whom his fellow-citizens had elected captain of the militia of the place. Although a Yankee, he quite believed himself a second Robin Hood, for he declared that he had never yet fired off a gun without hitting his mark. Fur or feather, nothing escaped his eagle sight. One of his friends told the following anecdote one evening in his presence: "Crockett's aim is so c'rect, that when he goes a gunnin', if a 'possum happens to see him, he puts

his paw up to ask him stop firin'. 'Air you David Crockett?' says the crittur. 'I guess I am that same,' replies the captain. 'Then hold hard, and I'll kem down to you; for I know I'm a dead 'possum, and there's no gettin' out of it no how.'" The story had been told before of this same Crockett, but he did not contradict it. I have heard it hinted that this coming down of the opossums without firing, may be explained by the fact that the captain uses an air-gun.

When Shakespeare wrote: "*Thereby hangs a tail*" (pardon the mis-spelling) he must have referred to the opossum, for never did the appendage which Fourier assigns to humanity assume such dimensions as with this animal. It is usually about fifteen inches long; black and devoid of hair. With this, the opossum can cling to trees, and hang from the branches as he watches for the prey on which he feeds. It is a most extraordinary sight to see the creature hanging in this manner, as if he were sleeping or swinging for sport, and as if it cost him not the slightest effort to maintain his position. His grasp is so firm, that you may kill the creature as he swings without forcing him to let go his hold. You may blow his head off with a charge of duck-shot, and there he will hang until the birds of prey have picked his carcase, and even when the tail has been cut off close to the dorsal spine, that marvellous tail will still hang there. A travelling Metho-

dist minister, wishing to exemplify to his auditors a lesson of perseverance in well-doing, once compared the true Christian to an opossum hanging by the tail to the summit of a tempest-tost oak :—

"Yes, my beloved brethren," said he, "take that for your model. The wind, whose violence may tear you from the tree of the Gospel, on which you rely for your salvation, is composed of the corrupt atmosphere of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Don't let go! Hold on like the 'possum in a storm! If the hind feet of your passions give way, hold on by the forefeet of your conscience; but if that support fails you, there is one final means of catching hold, which will be the anchor of your salvation, and by means of which you may rejoin those saints in heaven who persevered to the very end—hold on, like the 'possum, *by your tail.*"

Many persons consider that, as edible game, there is none better than the opossum. It is exactly like very tender pork, with rather a gamey flavour. The Indians cook the opossum by hanging him up by his tail upon a piece of wood, upon which he is turned before the fire. Although the flesh of the opossum is really very eatable, I must confess that, the first time I tasted it, the *musky* flavour of the meat somewhat turned my stomach; but the second time my teeth met in "'possum meat," I was less fastidious. This time, the dish was prepared by blacks, who are usually very excellent cooks, and

above all, when they cook for themselves. The game was placed upon a layer of sweet potatoes in a deep pit, with another layer of the vegetable over it, plenty of cayenne, and a few lumps of very fresh lard to augment the gravy. This was left to stew for about five hours, and was served quite hot. I must admit, that the meat was delicious, and that I know of nothing more juicy and succulent. I would advise our modern epicures to go and taste for themselves; for I am certain that as they returned from the journey they would be singing, like the niggers of the South:—

"'Possum berry good to eat,
'Possum he make tender meat;
Would you dinner nice and fat,
Eat a 'possum—tell you dat.
Djing! bing! bon! boum! bang! ba!
Den you drink of rum de glass,
Drinking cozy with your lass.
Djing! boun! djang! bing! ba!"

THE RACCOON.

I was travelling in Kentucky about the end of autumn. A farmer named Danielson in the neighbourhood of Railton, a little village at the foot of the Cumberland Mountains, and to whom I had a letter of introduction, very kindly offered me the hospitality of his house. I arrived one evening,

frozen with the cold, almost penetrated to the very marrow. The temperature had gone down very suddenly, owing to the storms of half-melted snow which were driven before a strong north-west wind. The cold, although severe, had not taken my host quite by surprise, for the two heaps of fire-wood which he had piled on either side of his house would have served for the firing of at least ten families. It looked like one of those wood-yards which you see in Paris, to supply the necessities of the whole quarter. Wood, as the reader will easily imagine, is not very rare in Kentucky, and the inhabitants are not unskilful in wielding the axe.

The sun had disappeared two hours ago behind the Cumberland Mountains, and the entire family of my host was seated around a large fire, talking of every conceivable thing that could interest people living in the backwoods. Clearings, crops, plantations, the ravages which the numerous beasts of prey had committed, and were still committing in the poultry-yard, and the havock caused among the grain by the crows, the grey squirrels and the raccoons,—these were the prominent topics of conversation.

"And the 'coons above all," cried Mr. Danielson; "those are the worst rascals I know. What gluttons! what thieves! The best part of our harvests are for them, and the earliest ears of ripe Indian corn bring 'em for miles around. Let

'em only come within reach of our rifles and we have no scruple in taking their skins as a slight compensation for the mischief they do us. Their skins make capital waistcoats, and their flesh a very good stew. About here, we have plenty of 'em, and it is really very good sport, on such a clear night as this, to go after them. It is not often that we bring an empty bag home with us, unless we're very unlucky. We must show you a little of that sport, sir, if you would like to see it."

"Why not this very evening?" said I to my host. "I am not so tired now, after the excellent dinner we have had, but that I could go out with you."

"I was afraid that the cold night——"

"Have no fear; I'm quite at your disposal."

"So be it then," cried the host; and without more ado, Mr. Danielson took down a couple of rifles, which were reposing on a magnificent pair of stag's horns over the fire-place, and rubbing them with a greasy rag, he loaded them with all the minute care with which a Kentuckian trapper performs that act. Then seizing a large ox's horn with a silver mouth-piece which hung on a lower branch of the horns, he opened the front door, advanced a few steps, and applying this primitive trombone to his lips, blew with all the power of his lungs, and produced a noise which might have put an army to flight. Not a word had been spoken, but my host, in answer to my inquiries, subsequently told

me, that the object of this horrible noise was to frighten the raccoons from the fields of maize and drive them to take refuge in the woods. "If we were to hunt 'em in the corn," said my host, "we should do more damage in half an hour, than all the 'coons in the district for a year are worth."

Whilst we were talking, the two sons of Mr. Danielson walked towards the kennel to let loose the dogs, and a negro lit a pine torch, which was intended to light us through the forest. Each was furnished with a well-sharpened axe, and we set out in the following order: the black first, whistling and capering, the two sons, Mr. Danielson, and last of all, myself. The farmer's sons were soon ahead of the negro, who did not walk fast enough for their taste. "Let 'em run on," said my host; "they must wait for us when they get to the spot; if you will take my advice, you'll walk carefully in my track, don't stumble over the old roots in the path, or over the trunks of the newly-felled trees, and above all, don't entangle yourself in the hanging branches. Take care how you carry your rifle, or you'll lodge a ball in my head, if a twig should happen to catch the trigger. Here, you rascal [this to the nigger], bring that light here. Don't you see that this stranger is not accustomed to night walks in Kentucky."

Whilst the father was taking all possible precaution to save me from an uncomfortable tumble, the

sons were far ahead, and, guided by their dog, had found a raccoon in a bush and had knocked it on the head. It was the first time that I had ever gazed upon this quadruped (*Procyon lotor*). He was scarcely as big as a fox, but more compact. The shape of the head was, however, very like the European fox, broad at the forehead and tapering down to the muzzle. The great point of distinction between the raccoon and the fox is his ears, which give an appearance to his head altogether dissimilar from his congener. His tail is more tufted, and is divided into black and white bands. His fore legs are shorter than the hinder, so that, when he stands upon all-fours, the hinder part of the raccoon is lifted higher than the front, and consequently the back is curved. When a raccoon walks, he only puts the tips of his toes to the ground, as the dog does, and when he rests, he lays the foot flat. Thus it is that he moves his body forward by an oblique and vertical movement, precisely like that of the squirrel. The raccoon feeds himself with his fore-feet, and with them he holds his food within reach of his teeth. The fur of the raccoon is reddish-brown at the sides, shaded with black on the loins, and almost white under the belly. The ears and nose are black, but the cheeks are of a bright-red.

Meantime, Mr. Danielson's dogs were on a new scent, and were hunting their quarry. They led the

way, without the slightest hesitation, along a path in the forest, and we did our best to follow them through the almost impassable windings of that path, enmeshed with brambles, roots, and the sharp leaves of the arbutus. The path was quite as bad as my host had announced it to be. Now we arrived at a piece of boggy ground, and the soil was so slippery, that we stumbled at every step; sometimes I stumbled against the trunk of a tree that had been felled, and presently a bramble threatened to upset my hat or my spectacles. At a moment when I least expected it, I was pulled up short, for my foot, or rather my boot, was fixed between two branches of root, which had arranged themselves in the shape of a bootjack, and from which I could not extricate myself without the assistance of my comrades' axes. This absurd incident seemed to give a piquancy to the adventure. We proceeded on our way, and presently arrived at a bog, into which a raccoon had plunged, the better to defend himself from the teeth of the dogs. By the light of the darkie's torch, we soon discovered the brute struggling through the mud, which reached up to his belly. His hair was on end, which made his body look enormous; and his tail was so set up, that he looked like a very large-sized wolf. He was foaming at the mouth, and his eyes were full of fire and flame, as he held himself in readiness to seize the first dog by the nose who should dare to come

within his reach. The dogs kept their distance, and contented themselves with making feints upon the raccoon, evidently with the intention of fatiguing him. Sure enough, in a short time, the creature began to manifest unequivocal symptoms of fatigue. Although he growled and screamed more loudly than ever, the dogs, quite undaunted by his noise, began to press him very close. One, bolder than another, caught hold of his tail, but a savage bite compelled him to let go his hold. Another seized him by the haunches, with little more success, for the raccoon seized him by the jaw, and held him there until the poor dog howled with pain, without being able to make the slightest effort to disengage himself. The raccoon seemed to think that he had won the victory, and enjoyed his vengeance with quite an appearance of delight, when the other dogs, seeing that they had nothing more to fear from his jaws, threw themselves upon him, and overcame him in a few minutes. The raccoon had not let go all this time, and he held his prisoner with his teeth, until the son of Mr. Danielson split his head open with the blow of an axe.*

So far, the hunt had been successful. We had already got two raccoons, whose skins were worth a

* This part of the narrative of a 'coon hunt bears such a close resemblance to a similar story by Audubon, that I have little doubt that M. Révoil has used the American naturalist's experience very much on the principle of Molière when he said: "*Où je trouve mon bien je le prends.*"—TRANS.

dollar a-piece, and the bodies about half the price, as Old Tom, the negro, told me, who valued everything by shillings and pence. I thought we had done enough, and expected that we should return home, but so thought not Mr. Danielson. "We have done very well, so far," said he; "so on we go." The dogs had gone on in advance, and were not long before they started another raccoon, who hastened to climb up a tulip tree close by. We were soon on his heels, and all the dogs, seated around the tree, were barking as hard as they could. Tom and the two sons of Mr. Danielson set to work at once with their axes on the trunk of the tree, and the splinters of the wood flew about so as almost to blind me. Happily, I escaped with the fright and with the loss of one of the glasses of my spectacles. At last the tree began to give way, and it toppled over with a tremendous noise. By St. Hubert! it was not only one raccoon that was hidden in the branches, there were three. One of them did not wait for the fall of the tree, but leapt off; the others took refuge in the trunk, where the dogs pounced upon them at once. Mr. Danielson and I gave chase to one of the dogs, who pounced at once at full cry on the track of the fugitive. This was an old raccoon, who had plenty of dodges, so our chase was a long one. However, I had the good luck to see him in an opening of the wood, chanced a snap shot, and hit him in the head. He turned over

once or twice and died, after a struggle. This was an enormous raccoon. The sons of our host had no such difficulty in bagging their game. To light some brushwood, and smoke out the hiding-places which the creatures had had the misfortune to trust to, to watch for them, and knock them over as they came out, was the affair of a very few minutes. The victims were lying on the ground, when we rejoined the group.

The moon rose, and its rays shone across the shadows of the forest, as we advanced as rapidly as the roughness of the road allowed us, looking quite as much upwards as downwards; trying to discover a raccoon asleep in the forks of the branches. At last I saw one, which looked like a black spot in that part of the sky which was lighted up by the moon, and firing, I had the good luck to roll him over with the single shot. My companions also had opportunities to display their skill, and we should have continued this fascinating sport, if our stomachs had not begun to cry out for supper. We made our way back, and, as the reader may imagine, did due honour to the repast that Mrs. Danielson and her charming daughter had prepared for us. It was delightful to see how appreciatively the sportsmen devoured the slices of smoked peccary ham, the muffins, and corn cakes soaked in cream as thick as butter, and sweet potatoes, as sweet as sugar, baked in the ashes. Nor

can I pass over, without honourable mention, a stew of raccoon, which Old Tom (an excellent cook) had set to work to prepare. My friends applauded it loudly, and, out of sheer politeness, I felt myself bound to take a mouthful of the raccoon's back. It required a strong effort to withhold myself from rejecting the morsel; but I can affirm, with all humility, that a slice of beef is far preferable to a fillet of raccoon; and that I had rather see the creature perched upon a branch, than served up upon a carving-dish.

Next day, Tom combined pleasure with duty, by skinning all the raccoons; and as he proceeded with his operations, I learnt from his lips the following account of these creatures:—"Yes, massa; the 'coon is as cunning as a monkey, and he's easily tamed. I reared one about three years ago, and he played with me like a little dog. I had to shut the door of the poultry yard very close, for fear the little rascal stole my eggs; for, sa, see you, it was the instinct of the animal to steal the eggs of the quails, the partridges, and every kind of bird. No critter knows better how to find the trees on which the nests are than this. One time, when my 'coon had left home, I found him in a big poplar, which was there at the bottom of the meadow. The rascal, by his claws, was dragging out, one by one, a family of red-breasts out of the hole in a tree, and was tearing them to pieces, whilst the poor

mother was flying round his head. My 'coon liked what was good—what a brute! Once I saw him curled up on the bank of a lake; a flock of wild ducks came by, and in a moment, my 'coon gave a leap, and he had fast one of the fattest of the flock. The only fault I had to find with my 'coon was, that he hadn't a proper respect for my poultry-yard; but even there, it was only the eggs that he eat. Besides, he was fed upon Indian corn boiled in water, into which I sometimes threw a spoonful of milk, by way of treat. Ha! the poor brute was killed by eatin', one mornin': he ate a whole hare (skin, flesh, and bone), just as if he had been a boa-constrictor." Here poor Tom shed a tear of regret; but immediately his mouth opened with the loud "ya! ya! ya!" followed by two "pshew! pshew!" which is stereotyped as the cachinatory symptom of the Laughing Nigger.

I will finish this chapter (which is already too long for the patience of my readers) with three sporting adventures with raccoons, which I happened to witness. One morning, I was shooting in the neighbourhood of Charleston, in the plantations of my friend Mr. Elliot. We had a brace of dogs with us—Rover and Black—and they put up a raccoon, which took refuge in a tree that grew up against steep rocks, a kind of natural wall, about sixteen yards in height. Caught in a trap, from which escape seemed impossible, the raccoon determined to

show fight, and springing into a narrow space, which was bare of the thorny vegetation which grew close around the rock, he took up his position boldly, like a boxer ready for his antagonist. Black threw himself upon it, open-mouthed, in a terrible rage, and towering in height over the little creature, held it at bay. There was a pause of a few moments, during which the animals glared at each other. At last, Black dashed on to the raccoon, and seized it by the chest, whilst the other fixed its sharp teeth in the dog's right shoulder. Poor Black was severely wounded, but the gallant fellow never uttered a sound, but threw the raccoon on the ground, and managed to squeeze it against a stone and strangle it. Rover arrived on the spot too late to be of any assistance, and I seized the raccoon by the tail, intending to knock its head against the rock, in case there was any life remaining; but the creature, dead as it was, had taken such a firm grip of my dog's shoulder, that we were obliged to prize its jaws open with sticks, before we could release Black. We had, after all, to carry the poor dog home, and he subsequently died of the wound.

Six months after that, I happened to be staying with a friend, at his farm near Beaufort, in South Carolina, when I saw a young raccoon, which the overseer of the plantation had taken a few days after its birth and reared. The little creature was scarcely two months old, and had the

free run of the house, playing about like a cat. The niggers called him Tommy, and they let him lick the plates in the kitchen, and now and then steal a bit of meat or fish. One day, his master saw him sneaking up to some young chickens, ducks, and other fowls in the poultry yard, and try the strength of his claws upon their plumage. Instead of opposing this natural disposition of the creature, my friend's overseer tied a rope to his collar, fastened to a log of wood, so that it was impossible for him to make a spring. Whilst I was staying at the farm, it occurred to my friend and myself to experiment upon the wild nature of the young raccoon. We let him loose in the yard, and when he felt quite sure that no one was looking, he began to approach the spot where the fowls and other birds were pecking grain. These, having looked upon him as harmless, indeed almost as a friend, showed no signs of alarm, when suddenly the raccoon sprang upon the back of an old cock, who, surprised at this sudden attack, immediately began to run round the yard, with his foe fixed upon his back. The whole lot of fowls was now in a state of considerable uproar, and were flying about in every direction. At last, the cunning raccoon, still astride of the cock, contrived to get hold of the bird's head in its jaws, and crunched it up pitilessly and as leisurely as possible, without allowing itself to be unseated by the dying convulsions of the victim.

"Si natura expellas," &c., and certainly the Beaufort raccoon demonstrated to us the truth of the adage.

One more story about a 'coon. I was shooting one morning with my friend O., a distinguished professor, and much beloved by all the cadets in the United States Military Academy. We were in a cedar wood on the banks of a little river not far from West Point (New York), and a pack of fine dogs had put up a raccoon. The cunning creature fled before the hounds and managed to put them off the scent. He disappeared as if by magic, close to a wooden bridge which crossed the stream. The dogs were evidently baffled, and stood growling and barking, as if they did not know what to do. We encouraged them with voice and gesture, and were at last going to give it up as a bad job, when a Yankee labourer came up and offered, with a sly wink, to show us the fugitive if we would give him a dollar for his trouble. We agreed to the bargain, and handed over the money. "There he is, then," quoth the Yankee. "Look up that ar tree, and you may see his tail hangin' out of the crow's nest." There he was, sure enough: the raccoon had sprung upon the parapet of the bridge and from that he had gained the tree, and so by the help of his claws he had climbed up to the deserted crow's nest, where he lay as snugly as possible, forgetting, the rascal, that his long striped tail would betray him. No doubt the hiding-place was well

known to him, and it is quite probable that he had enjoyed many a young flapper crow there at his leisure. I must add that, far from sparing master 'coon in consideration of the hearty laugh which his cunning dodge gave us, he died the death to which his congeners are usually condemned. A shot through the crow's nest, and down he came among the dogs, who lost no time in worrying him.

SWANS, HERONS, AND HAWKS.

In 1814, about the Feast of Epiphany, I happened to be at Louisville, staying with some friends who treated me very hospitably. The eldest son of my host, who was a daring and successful sportsman in every acceptation of the word, invited me to accompany him on an expedition which he purposed along the banks of the Ohio, to the point where that river joins the Mississippi. Our preparations were soon made, and we set out in a keel boat, a sort of shallop, with a little cabin aft, and a rudder formed of the trunk of a tree. Two rowers in the fore part of this boat could impel it at the rate of six miles in the hour.

The banks of the Ohio were mournful enough to look at. Winter had dried up all the herbage, and

the only green to be seen consisted of a few sugar-canes, with faded reddish draperies of creepers among them. The snow was falling when we set out, and the cold was worthy of Siberia or Kamschatka. At daybreak, however, the weather cleared up. We had then arrived at the mouth of the river Wabash, near the little town of Henderson, and we could perceive that, as far as we could see, the cold had frozen up the lagoons and fish-ponds which abound on these banks, for the air was filled with thousands of water-birds, flying from one bank to another, flapping about over the frozen waters. We let our boat drift among the feathered hosts, and after each broadside many were picked up and suspended outside our cabin.

This sport continued, and on the fourth day we found ourselves within six miles of the confluence of the Ohio and the Mississippi. The former unites itself with the Father of Rivers a little below Creek River, whose banks were shaded by carob trees, maples, and sugar-canes, interlaced with creepers and nettles, looking like an impenetrable wall. Here were large flocks of ducks, teal, coots, grebes, and water-hens. The cold had driven these tribes from the north, whence they had come in search of a milder temperature.

On a tongue of land which juts downwards from the confluence of the Creek and the Ohio, and sheltered by an enormous rock, whose base had

been laid bare by the stream, a party of Indians of the Cherokee tribe had pitched their tents, evidently for the purpose of laying in their winter stock of hickory nuts (which abound about here), and of hunting the bears, deer, and hares, all of which, like the Red Skins themselves, are attracted to these parts by the abundance of the crop.

My companion, who spoke the language of these wild hunters of the forest very fluently, proposed that we should pay a visit to the wigwams of the Cherokees, and I was not loth to comply, for I was very desirous of being initiated into the ways of these people, and even of accompanying them on the hunting path. An instinctive sympathy soon unites those who have similar tastes, whatever nation they belong to, and the Indians were as fond of hunting, fishing, and adventure as either myself or my friend, so we soon got to understand each other; and on the first evening of our arrival among them we were the best friends in the world.

Next morning, at daybreak, I heard a great movement around our boat, and on peeping out of our cabin door I saw about a dozen Indians, men and women, launching their big canoe of maple bark, and getting ready to cross the river into the State of Illinois. I and my friend dressed ourselves without delay, and we were not long in learning the plans of the Red Skins. They wished to visit a large lake, which was frequented by swans, in such numbers

that they prevented the waters of the lake from freezing, by the constant motion which they caused by swimming about. We soon obtained leave to join the hunting party, and seated ourselves in the after-part of the canoe, which was rowed by the women, the men stretching themselves along the bottom and finishing off quietly their interrupted slumbers. On reaching the opposite shore, the women fastened up the canoe and set to work gathering nuts, whilst the men made their way to the lake through a plantation of cotton, which lasted the whole distance, and much impeded our march. One must see these serried thickets, growing in the marshy plantations of the States, to have an exact idea of the difficulties with which the sportsman has to contend in pursuit of his favourite pleasure. To attempt to beat a path through them would be ridiculous; so you must make your way as you can through the thinnest places. In this way, with an occasional jump over muddy puddles of uncertain depth, we reached the borders of Mussel Shoal Lake.

What a sight for the European sportsman! Before me, I could see hundreds of snow-white swans, some arching their graceful necks over their wings; others with their wings set, allowing the breeze to impel them gently along, and all enjoying themselves in the rays of a magnificent sun. Directly they perceived us, the swans fled to the other end

of the lake, but their flight was in vain, for the plans of the Red Skins were so well laid that there they came upon an ambush of hunters who had gone round by the other side of the Mussel Shoal, and they soon fell victims to the fire of the party. Those who escaped flew back to us, and every shot told. When the battue was over, we counted fifty-nine of these splendid birds strewn over the lake, and it took us about an hour to collect them. Crossing the shoal by the same way which we came, we once more regained the canoe, and were ferried over the river. Before night fell, the Indians were once more in their wigwams, and we once more in our snug cabin. As soon as we arrived, the camp fires were lit. The supper of bear's meat, smoked deer's steaks, and nuts, was discussed with the appetite which hard work gives, and then every one stretched his feet towards the fire which was burning in the middle of the bivouack. Whilst their husbands, fathers, and brothers were enjoying a restorative slumber, the squaws were sitting on their heels, busily plucking the feathers from the swans and pressing them into sacks made of skins. I watched them for some time through our cabin window, but at length the need of rest drew me to my couch, and it was not long before I was fast asleep.

With this and similar kinds of sport we passed eight days among the Cherokees, and then all the nuts being gathered, and the game being frightened

away from the neighbourhood by our constant firing, the Indians prepared to shift their quarters. On the morning of the ninth day they packed up, struck their tents, and embarked to go down the Ohio to the Mississippi, on their way home to their native prairies.

As I and my friend had nothing more to do on the Creek River, we resolved to continue our excursion. Casting our boat loose at break of day, we reached the confluence of the Mississippi and the Ohio before night, a little below Cape Girardeau, and about ten miles from Fort Jefferson. The cold was now intense, so we resolved to build a log cabin and to take shelter in it until the weather became more favourable. Next day, I began to shoot over the neighbourhood, and by the end of the week had ransacked it thoroughly. In the course of my expeditions I met with some Red Skins, who joined us in our encampment. Some of these belonged to the tribe of Osages, and some to the Iowas. They subsisted mainly upon the produce of their hunting after the elk and the bison, of which there were large numbers in the vicinity. Sometimes, also, the Iowas directed their arms with great address upon the opossums and wild turkeys, and the skill with which they can shoot a bird on the wing through and through, or a small animal running at full speed, is really marvellous.

Our days were full of occupation. From morning

till evening we were hunting after the larger animals and the birds which cover the little fresh-water lakes which abound on this part of the Mississippi. At night, we sometimes turned out after the wolves, which prowled round our camp on the chance of snapping a bone or some other tit-bit. We could see the eyes of these gentry from afar, and sometimes succeeded in lodging a ball just between those gleaming orbs. When this happened, if we did not remove the body, next morning there was nothing to be seen. The hungry comrades of the victim had eaten him up clean.

We had stayed here fifteen days, and as our stock of provisions was growing shorter—owing principally to the Indians, who made no scruple in drawing largely upon our bread and spirits, it was decided upon by my friend and myself that we should cross the Mississippi, in order to visit a village on the opposite shore, and lay in a stock of flour and brandy. Next morning, we started betimes, leaving our domicile under the charge of the Osages, but we had not gone far when we came upon a herd of deer, which we followed in the direction of the prairies. My friend killed one of them, and we hung him up on the branch of a tree. After marking the place, we resumed our march, but presently made the unwelcome discovery that we had lost our way, and we wandered about all day without succeeding in discovering the banks of the river. Towards

night, we discovered, to our surprise, a large number of footprints in the snow; but ten minutes afterwards, to our immense gratification, we found ourselves at our own door, surrounded by the Indians, who laughed heartily at our adventure, and joked us about our awkwardness. As may be readily imagined, we had lost our way, and had been wandering about in a circle.

After a night's rest, we started off once more, and this time we went straight on. There was nothing to distract us, neither flocks of wild turkeys, nor herds of deer; and about one o'clock in the day we arrived opposite the village. But our difficulties were not over yet. The Mississippi was blocked up with large pieces of ice, and in spite of all our signals, no one dared to cross the river. There was nothing for it but to pass the night where we were. Fortunately, we found a deserted log-hut, and there we sought shelter. With the help of my gun and a little powder, we soon had a fire, and were not long before we had a wild turkey grilling before it, which we ate up to the very claws. A little straw and heather served us for a bed, and thanks to the fire, which we took care to feed well, the night passed without any disaster.

As soon as day broke, my friend and I left the shelter of the hut. The air was cold and fresh, and the icicles hung from the branches of the trees like stalactites from the ceiling of a cavern, and sparkled

so in the rays of the rising sun that we might have imagined ourselves to be in a forest of crystals. At our feet, the Mississippi rolled its blue waves, in the midst of which the snow-white ice blocks were rolling and clashing against each other. After we had made innumerable signals, we at last saw a boat coming over from the other side, and threading its way among the ice. After great exertions, the two men who were in it managed to reach us; and when we explained our wants to them, they went back again upon their dangerous errand, promising us to return that very evening. By way of putting the intermediate time to good use, my friend and I determined to start on an exploring expedition and fill our game bags, so that on our return to the encampment we might bring back something besides bread. We were soon at work, and before the afternoon we had bagged a score of snipes and two magnificent gelinottes, cock and hen, which rose right and left under the nose of our pointer, and received from each of us a charge of shot.

According to the arrangement, the two boatmen returned in the evening with a barrel of wheat flour, some large loaves, and a sack of Indian corn, with some demijohns of brandy. All these were placed on a sledge which we managed to knock together, and, by harnessing ourselves to this, we managed to arrive at the camp about the middle of the night, not too much fatigued.

Meanwhile the Mississippi began to rise, and the blocks of ice threatened destruction to our keel boat. With the aid of the Indian women, we lightened our boat of all that could be taken out of her; and with some trunks of trees we surrounded her with floating fenders, so as to protect her from the ice. When these precautions were concluded we managed to spend our days very pleasantly, and collected such quantities of game that the carcases of bears and stags, and the gelinottes and snipes, that we had slain, hung up on the branches of the trees, and also the hares which we had managed to knock over, gave our camp quite the appearance of a market. The lakes around were full of excellent fish, which the Red Skins caught easily with harpoons and nets, furnishing our table with magnificent trout and pike. The women spent their days in tanning the skins of the stags and otters, and in weaving rush baskets. In the evening my friend, who had a wretched violin, supplied the squaws with an excuse for a little dancing, whilst the men of our keel boat rivalled the Osages in their attentions to these copper-coloured "fair" ones. But for the enormous calumet which circulated freely, the scene would have reminded one of an ancient eclogue.

Three weeks passed in this manner, when one morning the camp was visited by a party of Black Feet Indians, who had come to pay a visit to the Osages. At first, the two tribes looked at each

other frowningly; but the speech of a Sachem seemed to produce a favourable impression, and peace and friendliness prevailed. Thanks to our new friends, we were now able to participate in a kind of sport which (except in Holland and Scotland) is now quite extinct in Europe—hawking for herons. The hawks of America closely resemble those of Europe, and are of about the same size and strength. The only difference is in the colour of their plumage, which is darker. As for the manner of training them for hunting purposes, my ignorance of the Indian language prevented me from gaining the information necessary to describe it accurately.

The day after the Black Feet arrived among us, we all started towards a marsh which was caused by some neighbouring springs. Everybody kept profoundly silent. Two dogs dashed into some rushes which grew on one side and started a large gray heron, who took flight at once, soaring as if he would soon be lost in space. In a few seconds, he was visible only as a black speck upon the blue sky. In a short time, one of the five falcons which the Red Skins had with them was let go after him. At first the bird stood still on the edge of the dark box in which he had been shut up, but suddenly looking up, he perceived his long-necked quarry, uttered two or three screams of rage, and with a flight almost as swift as that of a bullet, sprung upwards almost perpendicularly. Meanwhile, the heron

mounted higher and higher, and almost disappeared from view, and presently we could only see two black spots, that seemed to dash against each other, fly, approach and whirl about and about. Suddenly, the black spots came closer to us; the heron was trying to regain his place of refuge, pursued by the foe, and with his legs and neck stretched out, the head held stiffly and the wings furled, he looked as if he were an aërolite, dropped from some unknown planet. Like a skilful hunter, the falcon was driving the quarry our way; but the heron, seeing the danger he was in, made a rapid movement which deceived the falcon and gave the former an advantage of twenty feet. This space, however, was soon recovered, and the falcon, with a rapid dart, seized the heron by the throat and a close fight commenced. The heron, pushed to extremity, now threw itself backwards and fought its antagonist. Presently a large feather steeped in blood fell in our midst, and the falcon (for it had belonged to him), staggered back as if he had been shot. We thought it was all over with him, but he was far from being conquered. With greater fury than before, he darted on his enemy, and a rally ensued which words would fail to describe. After attempting every means of resistance and escape, the heron was gripped by the powerful talons of the bird of prey, and with breast torn open as by a sickle he fell heavily upon the marsh. Scarcely, however, had he touched the

ground when the falcon was on him again, bearing him up aloft, as he screamed out a last gasp, and then let him drop an inert mass, without life or movement. Three times during the day this extraordinary performance was repeated.

The frost continued, and the ice had so collected on the Mississippi that only a narrow passage, about the width of a canal, was left open to the stream. We determined on setting out for Cape Girardeau; so we bid good-bye to our friends the Red Skins in the most cordial manner possible, and on the evening of the same day were at the Cape. Next morning, after passing the Big Tower, an immense rock which rises about forty feet in the middle of the Mississippi, we made towards St. Geneviève, where we intended to rest after our labours. During the night we had heard on the Illinois bank the howlings of coyotes, hotly engaged in running down the deer. By the light of the moon, which shone as bright and clear as the electric light, we could see a pack of coyotes running after a stag and driving him to a place where another pack of the creatures was waiting for him. Presently, the noble animal found himself in the presence of his numerous enemies, and after a few short bounds, he fell a victim to their murderous teeth. At this moment, a cloud drew a veil over the scene, and what took place could only be imagined from the hoarse howlings and fierce contests of the coyotes as they

gave themselves up to the full enjoyment of their banquet.

After two days' rest at St. Geneviève, I and my friend determined to return home. Crossing the Mississippi, we soon found ourselves on the road which leads across the mountains to the banks of the Wabash; but before reaching the hilly country, we encountered prairies covered with water, which had to be traversed. Our moccasins, being made of skins, became very slippery, and were very difficult to walk in. In spite of this, however, during the first day we made about ten leagues, preceded by a herd of deer, which were visible miles off, by the constant movement of their white tails. These prairies, which, at the time we visited them, were quite barren, are like a flower-garden in spring, full of odours, and delightful to the sight. Clouds of butterflies of the most brilliant colours dispute the flowery banquet with the humming-birds; but alas! every medal has its reverse: the mosquitos are innumerable and render this Eden uninhabitable. The mosquitos of the prairie will attack a deer, or a bison, and kill it with the most cruel torture. It is a remarkable thing, that man is never troubled by this annoying insect excepting when he is asleep, and it is only when the heat is extreme that they fly above the level of the marsh. The deer, in order to avoid them, plunge into the water and remain there, with only their noses in the air.

Three days after quitting St. Geneviève, we found ourselves on the banks of the Ohio, and a hundred paces before us a light smoke, issuing from the roof of a little house, promised us a dinner and a bed. A good woman, the mistress of the house, received us very cordially, whilst the two sons examined our guns with delight, and as we dried our garments at the fire, a handsome young lassie served up the cooked venison steaks, eggs, coffee, and milk. A glass of whisky completed the hospitable repast. We slept beneath this friendly roof, and the next day resumed our journey, after sharing in an excellent breakfast. As the good woman refused to accept payment, my friend presented the sons with a horn of powder,— a precious gift in the backwoods of the West; and I, for my part, offered the young lady a new red silk handkerchief, which I had kept in the bottom of my wallet, and she seemed highly pleased with the present. In the course of the afternoon, we hailed a steamer which was going up the Ohio, and that evening we arrived at the house of my friend's father, where we were received like prodigal sons, not even omitting the ceremony of killing the fatted calf.

THE PANTHER.

On a wintry day, I happened to be shooting in the forests which extend along the Erie railway. Two friends, both of whom were capital sportsmen, accompanied me, and we were all three mounted on horseback, armed with our guns and followed by a pack of six dogs, with a bloodhound. The part of the wood which we happened to be drawing, was very dense, and consisted principally of cedars, cypress, and reeds for undergrowth. There were a great many little ponds about. The deepest gloom prevailed in the forest, which seemed to be populated by a great variety of game. The atmosphere was heavy, and the horizon dark and foggy, but in spite of the obscurity, we had made up our minds not to return without killing a deer. On a sudden, the bloodhound gave tongue, and after hunting about a good deal, brought us up before a thicket of cane, which was rendered quite impenetrable by the bindweed and creepers which interlaced it. The dogs halted before this, and, after a moment's hesitation, followed the bloodhound round the thicket, pricking up their ears and all attent, barking as if they were mad. We followed our dogs up as well as the branches of the trees would allow us, when presently, at the other side of the

cane-brake, the dogs found an entrance, and we could hear them giving tongue inside the thicket. I begged of my companions to let me do as I pleased, and taking off my coat, I bound my handkerchief round my head, and with considerable difficulty crawled in at an aperture which had given admission to the dogs. Drawing my gun after me (having taken care to renew the caps on the nipples), I made my way as quietly as possible through where no human being could have penetrated before myself. Presently, through the curtain of verdure which interposed between us, I saw that I was close upon the dogs, one of whom was rushing up to the trunk of a tree, whilst the other hounds were barking as if they were mad. I looked up to see what it was that so powerfully excited the rage of the dogs, and as soon as my eyes became accustomed to the darkness, I perceived, immediately over my head, a male panther (*Leopardus concolor*) of the largest size, about thirty yards above me, lashing his sides with his tail, and his eyes glaring like balls of phosphorus. To aim and give him a double shot was the work of a moment; but, although my aim had been good, the animal was not killed stone-dead. He clung to the branch with his claws as if he defied death; but after a short time, his muscles relaxed and he fell right into the midst of the dogs, and I could scarcely prevent them from tearing to pieces the beautiful skin of the superb creature. In the meantime, however, my

friends had come up, and by their help I was able to save my panther, and bring him out of the reach of mischief.

This was the first panther I ever killed, and I must confess that my delight was unbounded. The fellow I had bagged was a very fine one for the United States, where the panther is usually about the size of a large fox or a small wolf. The skin of this one was of a pale russet, streaked at the neck and at the end of the tail with oblong spots of a bistre colour, edged with brown. His belly was white; large, bright, greenish yellow eyes; his ears were pointed, and his feet were armed with claws half-an-inch long.

Whilst we were admiring the panther, the dogs had discovered another scent, and were scurrying on madly. We got to our horses, and after a quarter-of-an-hour's chase and describing a circle of considerable magnitude, we found ourselves before the same cane-brake. This time we tied up our beasts and entered the labyrinth altogether; when, lo! on the very spot where I had killed the panther, stood the female, growling furiously, with her jaws foaming, and wide open.—A broadside of three guns soon rolled her over; for she was hit in the head, the chest, and the belly. Without a moment's hesitation, I drew my bowie-knife and set to work to skin the panthers, aided by my friends, and we soon got off the skins, with the paws and heads attached. This done,

we distributed the carcases among the dogs, and set out joyously for Grammercy Land House, the habitation of a wealthy agriculturist, our intimate friend. On the way thither, close to the confines of the forest and near to a small lagoon formed by the branch of a small lake, our dogs came upon another scent. Was it a panther, a raccoon, or a deer? No one knew, but certainly we none of us expected to be made three-tailed pachas that afternoon. We were quite satisfied with the two panthers' tails we had won, when suddenly we saw a splendid panther jump from a tuft not twenty yards distant on to a birch, whence he seemed to defy our approach and that of our dogs. Another broadside of the three guns, and the animal, uttering frightful screams, rolled over upon the ground.—It was a fine dog panther in splendid condition, and measured five feet and a half long. So we were three-tailed pachas after all.

During the last adventure, night had come on, and when we looked for our road, we could not find it. Dense and prickly cane-brakes were all around us, and we had no Ariadne's clue to guide us out of the labyrinth. At last, however, the moon rose, and we struck off at a north-easterly direction to find Grammercy Land House. It was quite ten o'clock when our weary horses deposited us in the verandah of the farm. A good fire, a capital supper, and some charming companions, were waiting for us, and we

soon forgot our sport in the delight of a more than patriarchial hospitality.—The spoils of the day were laid at the feet of the three charming daughters of our host, and, according to the local journals, on the occasion of a fancy-ball, which was given at the Ocean House, Newport, on the 17th of August, 1847, the three Misses Q—, Fanny, Rebecca, and Lizzy, excited general admiration for the style in which their lovely white shoulders were set off by the skins of our panthers.

The fur of the panther is highly esteemed by the furriers of the United States. They make it into splendid carpets, bordered with the skin of the black bear. I saw in Philadelphia, at the house of a wealthy physician, a room entirely furnished with panthers' skins. The effect was magnificent and the cost immense. The divans, cushions, and chairs were all covered with this fur.

The panther is a beast of prey, and hunts by night, "seeking whom he may devour." Although he seems to walk slowly, he moves his limbs with such agility that he really gets over the ground with extraordinary swiftness. If there be game about, the panther soon finds a supper. In one or two bounds he easily seizes the prey that his appetite fancies; but if there be snow on the ground and the wind is high, the panther will hide under a rock, near some place where there are deer or small game, and there he will wait until the herd of deer (whose habits he

instinctively understands), the turkeys, who feed around the trunks of the trees, or the hares come around him, and then at a favourable moment he will make his spring, and rarely misses his prey.

Sometimes the panther will attack man himself, but this is usually when he is very hungry and his little ones are famishing. The following story will support this statement. The second time I hunted the panther, it was at Shenandoah, in the State of Virginia, on the banks of Cedar Creek River, which flows at the foot of a lofty chain of mountains, whose summits are covered with pines, cedars, and tufted bushes.—I had been very hospitably entreated in the house of Mr. Pendleton, and one evening we were seated around a table, busily engaged in filling our glasses out of a bowl of whisky punch, when suddenly our conversation was interrupted by the fearful cries which issued from a chamber close to the dining-room. Mrs. Pendleton was there, with a sick infant and its nurse. The window, it appeared, had been open, and an enormous panther had leapt from the top of the piazza and was ready to spring upon the child's cradle. The cries of the poor mother and nurse soon brought us to the room, but the brute had taken fright, and we only learnt what had take place when it was too late to go in pursuit. The dogs about the house were let loose on the traces of the panther; but they soon came back, with their tails between their legs, as if

they did not fancy the task which had been imposed upon them.

Next morning, long before dawn, the three Messrs. Pendleton and myself accompanied by three negroes and eight fine bloodhounds, started on the traces of the panther, through some of the thickest and most difficult paths I ever saw in my life. At last we arrived at an open space where we found the body of a newly-killed deer, half devoured. It had been killed during the night, for the meat was quite fresh. This looked as if we were not far from the panther, who had probably retired for the day. There was snow upon the ground, and we were not long in finding the footprints of the brute, marked as sharply as possible. These led us up the Paddy Mountains, until we came to a rock with a large cleft in it, forming a natural cave, in which we could see nothing but the most profound obscurity. One of the dogs looked into the cave and at once gave tongue, and the rest (frightened as they had been over night) rushed at the cave-mouth without hesitation. Two of them got in before the Messrs. Pendleton could prevent them, and immediately we heard a terrible growling, followed by the barking of the hounds. We scarcely knew what to do. Unless the dogs could be extricated they were certain to be killed. Two of the blacks crawled into the cave, and fortunately managed to catch hold of the hounds, whom they drew out forthwith. The one

who entered last was safe and sound, but the other one had been dangerously wounded by the panther. Under the orders of Mr. Pendleton, the niggers cleared the mouth of the cave of all the wood and foliage which obstructed it, and Mr. Rudolf Pendleton entered the cave alone. There was a moment of silence, for even the hounds seemed to understand that they were to keep quiet. After about a couple of minutes, the young man returned from his dangerous expedition. He had seen two panthers instead of one. One was crouching down at the further end of the cave, and the other had mounted on a ledge of rock to the left.

It was arranged that Mr. Rudolf should go in first, rifle in hand, and that his brother Harry should follow with a spare weapon ready to hand to him in case the first shot did not kill the first panther. Mr. Charles Pendleton and myself stood in readiness, whilst the niggers held the hounds in leash. There was a moment of intense expectation, and then an explosion, as if a mine had been fired close to us; then the two Pendletons appeared, one carrying his brother's gun, and the other dragging by the tail an enormous panther, measuring at least five feet from nose to tail.

Whilst we were examining this splendid panther, two of the dogs slipped their leashes and rushed into the cave, where they set at once upon the other animal perched upon the ledge. Fortunately for

the dogs, the brute was in an agony of terror, and offered no defence; so they worried it without any difficulty. When the struggle was over, one of the blacks dragged out the panther, which was only a cub, and threw it by the side of its mother.

I will conclude this chapter with an adventure which I met with in the backwoods of Florida. One frosty morning, an American and myself were shooting about fourteen miles from St. Augustine, on the banks of the river St. John. Our three dogs had tracked a panther, who had avoided them by swimming to a little island within gunshot of the shore. As the dogs were pursuing him, the creature turned round suddenly, seized the head of the dog nearest him and dragging it under water, managed to drown him. Fortunately, the two other dogs, seeing the danger, returned to us.——The panther, meanwhile, had reached the opposite shore, and as it was quite impossible for us to cross the river St. John, we had no resource but to follow him with our eyes. On getting out of the water, he sprang upon a rock which was on the bank, and then we could see him creeping along a tree and stretching himself upon a branch which was exposed to the sun, where he could lie and allow his splendid fur to dry.

Presently, however, there appeared to our astonished eyes a Carib Indian, creeping along the ground, and then climbing a tree next to that in

which the panther was seated, the branches of the trees intermingling. By this means he got quite near the panther, and when he saw him there was only a few yards between them. The panther seemed to be calculating the length and vigour of its spring; hesitating, however, lest the branch should not be able to bear the shock. The Indian, armed with spear and bowie-knife, awaited the beast of prey as it cautiously advanced, fixing its sharp claws into the slippery bark of the tree, and creeping on inch by inch, whilst its green eye shone with sanguinary brightness. It was a remarkable sight, though we had an instinctive feeling that, great as was the danger, the man would conquer the animal. We could not help admiring the elegance, vigour, and suppleness of the panther. Suddenly the Red Skin raised his spear and struck the panther a blow, to which the only reply was a hoarse, deep roar. The animal then skulked behind a branch, which protected it. Presently the Carib saw the jaws wide open, and darted in the point of his spear, which had the effect of producing another howl fiercer than before. The panther extended a paw, as if to seize a branch, which would have raised it on a level with its foe. The situation was becoming critical. The enormous paws were close to the knee of the Red Skin, and the short, deep breathings of the brute indicated the tremendous effort which was about to be made. My friend and I would have put

an end to this horrible struggle, if it had not been for the danger of hitting the man as well as the beast, and our guns were loaded with buck-shot. At this moment the Carib plunged the blade of his knife in the eye of the panther, who could neither retreat nor advance, and could only express its rage by loud and continued howlings. In its vain efforts it lost its balance and fell upon the bank. Our four barrels seemed to be discharged all at once, and after a brief struggle the panther lay stone-dead.

At the unexpected explosion, the Carib looked over to where we were, raising a vigorous war-whoop, which he intended at the same time as an acknowledgment of aid and a cry of victory. He slid down the tree with the agility of a cat, and testified to his delight at the unexpected aid which he had received by an improvised dance. With marvellous dexterity, he soon skinned the brute, and the skin measured five feet three inches long, from head to tail. The Red Skin afterwards joined us and accompanied us to St. Augustine, where my companion, who was well acquainted with the governor of the State, obtained for him a reward for his skill and courage. This Carib turned out after all to be no obscure Indian. He was well known as Billy Bowlegs, the trapper, and is now chief of the Caribs in the peninsula of Florida.

PASSENGER PIGEONS.

JUST before dawn one morning during the autumn of 1847, I was on the heights over the town of Hartford, Kentucky, looking for rice birds and other such "small deer," when suddenly the sky seemed darkened as I quitted a wood, and on looking up I saw immense flocks of pigeons.* These

* The passenger pigeon of North America (*Ectopistes migratorius*) belongs to a peculiar species, which is to be met with in all the Northern States and in Canada. A large number of these birds pass the winter up to the sixtieth degree of latitude, and live among the thickets of juniper. The beauty of their plumage is remarkable, for it is shot with azure, gold, purple, and green. The head of the male is of a dusky blue, and the breast of a hazel, shaded with red; the neck streaked with green, gold, and scarlet; the wings blue, spotted with black and brown spots, and the belly as white as snow. Across the tail, which is very long and wedge-shaped, is a stripe of bright black, and the feet are as red as those of the French partridge. The female has not got such brilliant colours. Her plumage is dusky grey, mixed with black and dark chestnut. The only beauties which Nature has bestowed upon her are those of her form, which is graceful and slim, and the limpidity and brightness of her eye. The migration of these passenger pigeons has been attributed by different naturalists to the imperious necessity of flying from the rigours of the cold, and from the foggy climate of the North, to seek a milder temperature. This is not, however, the whole cause, in my opinion. They are attracted and repelled by the abundance or scarcity of the fruits on which they feed, and it is only when they have exhausted all the resources of the neighbourhood in which they settle that these pigeons resume their flight and change their location. Several inhabitants of Kentucky and Illinois have assured me that, after remaining for two or three years in the woods of these States, the passenger pigeons flew off one morning, when there was not a single acorn left for them to feed upon. In 1845,

birds were flying too high to be within shot, so I had no chance of making a breach in their ranks. I determined, therefore, to count the flocks which passed over my head within an hour. I sat down quietly, and drawing a pencil and paper out of my pocket, began taking notes. In the space of thirty-five minutes I counted two hundred and twenty flocks of pigeons flying overhead. After this the separate flocks seemed to unite and to fly in a compact body, which hid them very soon from sight. The dung of these birds fell like snow in winter, and covered the soil.

Returning to the inn at Hartford about mid-day, I had leisure to examine the continuation of their miraculous flight. The pigeons made no halt in the surrounding plains, for all throughout the

they returned in large numbers. The greedy rascals! The harvest was magnificent, and they wanted their share. Like those European carrier pigeons which were used to carry news before the invention of the electric telegraph, the American pigeons have a prodigious power of flight. I have killed birds in the State of New York, with their crops full of Georgian or Carolinian rice; from which I conclude that they had flown the three to four hundred miles in six hours at the utmost. The American pigeons, besides the faculty of flight, have also a remarkable power of vision. They have no need to stop and explore for the fruits and grain on which they feed; whenever they fly very high, and extend their battalions afar, they are reconnoitring the land; and when they descend towards the earth in a serried mass, it is because they have made a fortunate discovery that the pasture is abundant. The whole anatomy of the pigeon, its powerful wings, forked tail, and oval body, fits it for long and rapid flight; and in spite of an organisation so little calculated to render the flesh tender, these pigeons are much sought after in America, where they are considered very delicate eating.

neighbourhood the crops of nuts and acorns had failed. It was of no use to burn powder at them, for they kept out of the reach of the longest-ranged fowling-piece. When a grey eagle dashed upon their rear-guard, they formed into a compact mass, which looked like a serpent twisting about to avoid the bird of prey; and when the danger was over, or the enemy had seized his victims in his clutches, the column resumed its march through the blue fields of air.

During the three days of my stay at Hartford, the population was under arms. Men and boys all carried double or single-barrelled guns, and lay hid behind woods, rocks, and wherever there was a chance of a shot. Prodigious quantities were killed by these means, and every evening the conversation ran principally on the pigeon-shooting, or the events of the different shots, and on the chances of the morrow. During these three days, nothing was eaten but pigeons, and the air was so impregnated with the odour of these birds, that the whole neighbourhood smelt like a dove-cot. An arithmetician of the vicinity made an approximate calculation as to the number of individual birds of which these extraordinary hosts are composed, and of the enormous quantity of food required for their sustenance. Wilson, the celebrated ornithologist, also made a similar calculation with very astonishing results. He relates having witnessed one of their migrations,

deserted during the day, every evening it was filled with pigeons, which came from the State of Indiana, where they had passed the day, near the village of Coridon, about fifty leagues distant. Next morning at dawn, they would fly off in the same direction. All round the roosting-place, the soil was covered with a kind of guano, from two to three inches deep. To look at the verdureless soil covered with a greyish tint, the denuded trees, the barkless and sapless branches, one would have thought that it was the middle of winter, or that a tornado had stripped all the branches off the trees, and burnt up the herbage in the neighbourhood.

The sportsmen were making ready for the evening's sport, and everything was in a state of preparation. Some were stuffing sulphur into stink-pots; others were getting ready long poles like bakers' shovels, with torches made of resin and pine branches at the end; others had ready single and double-barrelled guns, each loaded with a good charge of powder and shot. As the sun set, each took his place in silence. Not a bird was to be seen; but presently I heard the words whispered round: "Here they come!"

The sky, indeed, was darkened by the flight of the pigeons, and the noise of their wings was like that terrible mistral that is to be met with in the gorges of the Apennines. As the column of pigeons flew over my head, I felt a kind of trem-

bling, caused by astonishment and cold, for the displacement of the air caused a perceptibly strong atmospheric current. All this while, the long shovels were knocking over the birds by thousands. The torches had been lit as if by magic, and I was witness to an extraordinary spectacle. The pigeons came in millions, swarming like bees in May. The noise was so great, that you could scarcely hear the frequent discharges of the guns. The massacre lasted for several hours.

It is a noticeable fact that, in spite of the terror which they felt, the pigeons did not abandon their favourite roosting-place; and that neither the noise, nor the torches, nor the firing could make them do so. A man who came to join the party, assured us that he could hear the disturbance a league and a quarter off. At break of day, the flocks of pigeons started once more in search of their daily bread; the noise they made in taking flight was tremendous. The sportsmen then began to select from the heaps of dead and dying the finest and fattest birds, which they heaped up upon carts, leaving the rubbish for the pigs and dogs. For me, although I had taken my part in the massacre, I only took for my share a magnificent eagle's feather, which I had shot from one of those birds of prey, as he perched upon a heap of carcases.

Two months after this memorable adventure, I was on the East River Quay, New York, when my

eyes were attracted by an inscription painted in black letters upon a piece of sail-cloth, "Wild Pigeons for Sale." I went on board the little coaster which had this feathered cargo on board, and there the captain showed me baskets of the wild pigeons which he was selling at three halfpence each.

A Tennessee planter told me that in one day he captured four hundred dozen of pigeons by the net, a mode much employed in the country. His negroes, to the number of twenty, were fatigued with knocking down the pigeons as they crossed his plantation.

In the month of October, 1848, the passage of these birds was so considerable in the State of New York, that they were sold at a penny each on the quays and in the principal markets. Masters fed their servants upon them, and they, if only they could have anticipated what was going to happen, would have had a clause inserted in their agreements of service that they were not to have pigeons for dinner more than twice a week.

One morning, in the same month of October, 1848, along the heights of the village of Hastings, on the banks of the Hudson, I had a chance of firing thirty shots at flocks of pigeons, and bagged a hundred and thirty-nine birds. Among these there were about eighty immense birds, as fat and plump as little fowls, and I was obliged to hail a negro

and give him half a dollar to help me carry the game to the steamer for New York.

The American pigeons are to be found, more or less, in all parts of the States, but usually these birds select retired and unfrequented woods on the boundaries which separate the back-woods from civilisation. The hatching season offers a singular contrast to the scenes of noise and confusion which I have described. If my readers will then go with me into the forests of the Ohio and the Mississippi, they will hear incessant cooings, and be witnesses to the constant proofs of affectionate attention which the male pigeon lavishes upon his spouse. Overhead, in the tops of the trees, they will see the nests, built close to each other, made of twigs of trees interlaced, in which the male and female sit, in turn, upon two or three eggs. The male mounts guard to protect his spouse, and he sallies forth to get provisions, and returns to place himself on the nest and shelter the eggs under his wings.

Fortunately for the birds, this affectionate solicitude is frequently rewarded, but woe to the poor pigeons if the settlers of the neighbourhood discover their hiding-places. From this, as from all that I have written, it will be perceived that destruction menaces this kind of game. In proportion as civilisation extends its boundaries over the vast deserts of the West, the necessities of man become more numerous, and the human race, which tyrannises every-

where, allows no curb to its despotism, and destroys wherever it goes. Already have the deer, elks, and bisons disappeared from the principal States of the Union. The herds of bisons which, a hundred years ago, used to pasture peacefully on the far-off savannas of the Mississippi, now see their ranks thinned, whilst the bones of those which have been slain by trappers, emigrants, and Indians, whiten the soil and mark the passage of Man. Everything leads us to suppose that the pigeons, forced to retire as the States grow more and more populated by the overflow of Europe, will finally disappear from the continent; and if the world does not come to an end before the century, it is likely that the sportsmen will only find the wild American passenger pigeon in the cabinets of collectors.

PRAIRIE DOGS.

If ever there was an inoffensive creature in the world, it is the little American marmot, or prairie dog (*Spermophilus ludovicianus*). Every one of these little animals lives after his own fashion, without so much as thinking ill of his neighbour, far less of circumventing him and living at his expense. The prairie dog is a pattern to all other creatures.

I often wished, during my stay in the States, to

visit one of their colonies, and the opportunity occurred to me one evening after a long hunt with the Red Skins. One of the Pawnees, with whom I happened to be hunting, wandering from the party, came upon a little valley, in which, on the side exposed to the sun, he hit upon "a prairie-dog town," and the same evening he told us of his discovery. Early next morning we were all agog to visit this curious phalanstery. All that I had heard of these quadrupeds made me approach their immense colony with an interest in addition to that which I felt as a sportsman.

Before arriving at the hill, on the other side of which were the marmots, we got off our horses, and, leaving them tied up to the trees, we advanced cautiously towards "the town." I know not whether it was the sound of our footsteps, but immediately we approached the sentinels gave the alarm, and ran towards the nearest burrows to rejoin their comrades, and then, sitting on their tails at the entrances of the burrows, they set to barking in a peculiar manner, and after a queer kind of frisk, each disappeared into his respective cave. The "town" of prairie dogs before us covered a space of about twenty acres. Over all this superficies the earth was pierced, mined, and covered with caves, proving the subterranean industry of this curious creature. We tried the depths of many of these holes with our ramrods, but were quite

unable to touch one of the inhabitants with the point. There was only one way of seeing the marmots at our leisure, and that was to conceal ourselves and wait patiently until fear had given way to confidence. It was a circumstance favourable to our plan, that, on the borders of the "town" was a row of dwarf cedars, whose dwarfed branches would enable us to see without being perceived. We retired with as little noise as possible, and each having taken his place, remained immoveable, keeping the most profound silence, every eye fixed on the "town," the doors and windows of which were open indeed, but not just then crowded.

Little by little, we could see a few old stagers put their nose out of doors and then disappear. Others jumped out for a moment, but only to quit one hole to leap into another. At length, a few of the marmots, reassured by the tranquillity which reigned around, and believing that the danger had gone by, slipped out of their hiding-places. They rapidly crossed a considerable space and entered a hole. We could only imagine that they had gone to visit a friend or relative to recount the alarm which they had felt, and to discuss the causes of the panic, and compare observations upon the vision which had passed before their eyes. Afterwards, other marmots, grown bolder, began to throng in groups in the middle of the streets, and these groups were apparently engaged in discussing the outrages which

had been committed against the republic, and in devising means of defence. An orator, mounted on the summit of a clod, whereby he was raised above the assembly, explained his views, plans, and strategic principles, until, seized by a sudden dread, the whole assembly would rush to the adjacent holes and thence issue forth again only to recommence the same games. It was the most curious thing possible to observe the gasconading attitude of these marmots. Sometimes they seemed ready to defy the lightning, and then they fled at the least breath of air.

When we had examined these little inhabitants of the prairie at our leisure, it was proposed among us that each should take aim at a marmot; and when I gave a cluck with my tongue we were all to fire together. This was done, and when the smoke cleared away, there was only one prairie dog on the ground before us, and six who lay dead at the mouths of their burrows.

It is stated that the prairie dogs are not the only inhabitants of these subterranean corridors, but that they share them with the rattle-snakes and owls. We wished to verify this, but were quite unable to do so. We did not even see the tail of an owl, nor did we hear the slightest indication of a rattle-snake. The vulgar belief is, that the owls who live with the prairie dogs are of a particular kind; that their eyes are brighter, their flight more rapid, and their claws longer than the common owl;

moreover, that they are not frightened at the daylight, as their compeers are. Some naturalists, however, maintain that the owls only take refuge in the excavated holes when the prairie dogs have abandoned them. The sensibilities of these creatures is said to be so acute, that when one dies, the whole community abandons the place. Others declare that the owl is a protector, sentinel, and even preceptor to the young marmots, whom he teaches how to cry out, *even before they are hurt.*

With regard to the rattle-snake, he is said to be more ungrateful, for he accepts the shelter of the marmot, and occasionally helps himself to a little one when he is hungry. Some weeks after the last adventure, returning to St. Louis, we met close to the camp, an immense "town" of prairie dogs, in a valley formed by two limestone rocks, not far from a spring which rose among the rocks, and supplied a silvery stream, which irrigated the whole length of the valley. The noise of our horses had terrified all the inhabitants of the subterranean city; only two enormous owls were perched on an immense hillock of earth, as if they wished to know who it was who invaded their territory. As bold and fierce as fighting-cocks they seemed to defy every danger. Their large eyelids were wide open, and displayed eyes of phosphorescent brightness. They were horned owls, and certainly looked like the guardians of a deserted necropolis. They

waited until we arrived within gun-shot, and then suddenly disappeared into the bowels of the earth. We had no idea how they managed it, for it was like *Bertram's* disappearance in the fifth act of "Robert le Diable." One of our companions declared that he saw a blue flame where each owl had disappeared; but this is not historical.

The place where we encamped for the evening was prettily adorned with tufts of trees of every kind, pines, oaks, birches, cedars, wild cherry-trees, mingled with the American eglantine and the hawthorn. Groups of nut-trees and sumacs completed the rich variety. We had no difficulty in getting our evening's fire. The air was coldish, and my friends were lying, as usual, on beds of dried leaves, heads and bodies well wrapped up in blankets, and feet turned towards the fire. I had been away all the evening, hoping to kill a deer. On regaining the camp, I hastened to get together the leaves which were to serve me for a bed.

At the foot of an old oak, in the hollow of a rock, the wind had heaped up an immense quantity of leaves, and nothing was easier than to collect all this into my blanket and bring it to the fire, by the side of which I began to prepare my bed. Suddenly a strange noise was audible among the leaves. I examined them with care, and recoiled with horror on perceiving I had gathered up with them a rattle-snake, which with body curled up

for a spring, and head erect, darted its forked tongue towards me. To seize a faggot of wood, the end of which was on fire, and knock the reptile over, was the work of a moment. I went immediately to examine the rest of the leaves, to see if this were a solitary specimen, when, to my horror and disgust, I discovered half a dozen young snakes coiled up together. Finding themselves disturbed by my stick, they darted off in all directions; and although my companions, awakened by my cries, lost no time in joining me, the agility with which the little vermin made their escape was such that we only killed two of them. This incident very naturally kept us awake during the whole of the night. In the morning, a strange spectacle was presented to our eyes. Looking over the brow of the hill we perceived more than a thousand of the marmots, and a large number of owls and rattle-snakes sporting together with great agility.* Directly we showed ourselves all disappeared, with the exception of the serpents, who glided about from hole to hole raising their heads every now and then. An hour afterwards we were on the banks of the Mississippi, and not long after that, under the ægis of American civilisation.

* If M. Révoil *saw* this, well and good. The testimony is, however, against the experience of some of the most reliable American observers. —TRANS.

THE WILD CAT.

Louisiana and North and South Carolina are the States in which wild cats most abound. The marshes on the banks of the Mississippi, the dense forests, which are flooded by the overflow of the Pamlico and Santee, harbour these brutes, which are so destructive to game of every kind. The worst of the matter is that, although they are pretty hotly pursued, the wild cat is as numerous as ever. The destruction of the race seems to be impossible. The Americans themselves consider that hunting the wild cat is one of the best kinds of sport they have. With them, it rivals the English fox-hunt. The planters, indeed, do not dress so smartly as the fox-hunter, and the only mechanical appliance which they copy is the horn which fox-hunters use.

The wild cat of the States is an enormous animal, resembling the tame animal only by the markings on the fur. I never saw larger tom-cats than those of Carolina. The reddish fur, diagonally striped with dark shades, the tail, brushed like that of a fox, their pointed ears (closely resembling those of the lynx), all combine to make the brute resemble a kind of tiger,—the negroes of the Southern States describe the wild cat, according to the genius of their picturesque language: "As greedy as a pawn-

broker; as cunning as a briefless barrister; as fierce as a peccary, and as hard as a tortoise. In fact (say they), the brute is like a woman,—comparable to nothing but herself."

The first time I examined the head of a wild cat, one thing struck me very forcibly,—its resemblance to that of the rattle-snake. The expression is of the same hideous wickedness, the same jaws, the same teeth. One morning, in North Carolina, on the borders of the marsh known as the Great Dismal Swamp, I had strayed from my friends, followed by my faithful hound *Black*. I attempted a return to the house from which I had set out, when, suddenly, my dog darted back from the corner of a rock, his hair on end, his tail between his legs, and growling loudly, as if for assistance. I looked before me, and could scarcely contain a cry of horror. Forty paces before me were a wild cat and a rattle-snake engaged in mortal combat. One hissed, and the other mewed, and both gave a terrible idea of passions in a state of contention. The serpent darted about in folds remarkable for their grace and elegance, and the cat arched her back quite ready to pounce upon her enemy, directly the opportunity offered itself. The serpent darted forward; the cat leapt on one side. In an instant, however, the snake caught hold of its antagonist by the haunch, and the latter seized its antagonist in its claws; but before any further mischief could be done, I had put a

charge of shot through and through the dangerous reptiles, and had rendered them quite incapable of further mischief.

The Indians have a saying that the rattle-snake lives on the miasmatic air of the marshes, and that the wild cats live on the breath of slanderers. When they are describing a quarrel in the tribe, they say "So-and-so is breeding wild cats in his wigwam." Pistols are used in hunting the cats in the marshes, and when the hunters are armed with revolvers, the cats are capital living bull's-eyes for the exercise of their skill.

One day, I was witness to a hunt after a cat, which terminated oddly enough. The tree on which the animal had sought refuge, was one of those enormous poplars, straight as a mast, and whose tops are lost in the skies. The cat had climbed to the top, and we soon discovered him crouched up near the trunk, and looking down as with an ill-concealed air of contempt. After examining the tree carefully, we discovered a creeper which was twisted all up the tree, and on which the cat was perched. After cutting and unwinding this carefully, a sudden jerk threw the cat off the tree, and after a few evolutions in the air, he soon fell into the jaws of the dogs.

I will bring this chapter on wild cats to a close, by detailing an adventure that happened on a plantation in South Carolina, not far from Beaufort, the most picturesque town in that State, built in the

midst of the Isle of Port-Royal. It had struck eight one morning in the house of Mr. Potter, where I happened to be staying, and the neighbourhood of which was supposed to be infested by wild cats. Our horses were saddled and bridled, and five of us started, including the doctor of the plantation and myself, with a huntsman and four bloodhounds in leash, three pointers and a spaniel. In this fashion we drew the wood, sometimes finding a snipe, sometimes a pheasant, and as our double-barrels were loaded with ball on one side, and shot on the other, we were quite ready for whatever turned up.

Directly the blood-hounds were uncoupled, the huntsmen came upon the body of a hare, half eaten, and still fresh. He felt certain that this was the work of a wild cat. At the moment, the dogs hit upon the scent, and, immediately afterwards, they started the brute before us, as swift as an arrow, rushing into a thicket which no Christian could penetrate. We surrounded the thicket immediately, holding our guns in readiness, and trying to make out our game in the obscurity which prevailed. The cat kept quiet, and would not break cover, although the dogs did all they could to force it out. Several shots were fired through the thorns without effect; until, at last, I saw a velvet body crouching along the branch of a tree very carefully. I fired, and down he fell; with the help of his bowie-knife, the

huntsman soon cut a way to our quarry, and laid him at my feet. This enormous cat weighed fourteen pounds. On another occasion, my favourite dog *Black*, having hunted a wild cat up a tree, where he was leaping from branch to branch, I had the satisfaction of shooting him as he was leaping from tree to tree, and of dropping him from a height of fifty feet, right before my friends, who had assembled to witness my skill, and into the very jaws of the dogs.

WILD GOATS.

Ascending the Arkansas river, which has given its name to one of the largest territories of the United States, the traveller arrives at the foot of the Masserne mountains, rocky precipices which are, in fact, a spur of the chain of the Rocky Mountains—the steppes of the New World. This desert, whose soil is only trodden by a few tribes of Indians and an immense quantity of game, is covered, during eight months of the year, by a spotless carpet of snow.

There were plenty of bears upon the hills, and grouse abounded among the cotton plants and the dwarf oaks which grew abundantly among the fissures

of the rocks. Raccoons, panthers, wolves, and crows fought for the inexhaustible quantity of game; geese, turkeys, quails, cranes, ostriches* (for there are ostriches in the States), crowded round us, attracted by the abundance of the game. But the most elegant quadruped, whose innumerable herds pasture in perfect liberty on the grassy slopes of the Switzerland of the States, is unquestionably the wild goat,† known to the Indians as the *Apert-choekoos*, and to naturalists as the American antelope, or prong-horned antelope (*Antilocapra americana*).

The pioneers who accompanied Colonels Lewis and Clarke on their voyage across the Massern and Rocky Mountains, were the first to describe this graceful animal. Like the chamois, the creatures are very timid, and never sleep except upon the summit of some rock whence they can survey all the surrounding country. Their sight is so good, and their smell so acute, that it is very difficult to approach within gun-shot of them. Directly they

* I saw in the possession of a New York naturalist two ostriches, one male and the other female. They had been killed in Iowa, near Monks' Fort. They were five feet in height, and four feet and a half in length. Their beaks were five inches long, and were very sharp. They differed very little from the African ostriches. They had been sold for about 200*l.* each.

† The wild goat of America is a most beautiful and graceful creature. Its colours are brown, black, reddish and white, and the fur is long and silky. The male is always larger than the female, and behind each ear is a little black place, where a liquid is deposited, the odour of which is insupportable. A wild goat usually weighs from a hundred and fifty-five to a hundred and seventy pounds

suspect themselves to be in danger, they dart off with the rapidity of a bird in full flight. Every evening, the herds of wild goats leave the steep pastures and descend towards the plain, where they file off to quench their thirst at the nearest spring. At the slightest danger which threatens the herd, the male goat at the head of the herd utters a sharp cry, and immediately the whole party retreats in the most disciplined manner, and disappears with the rapidity of lightning. The male, however, always remains until the last, and not unfrequently falls a victim to the sportsman. I once heard Colonel Kearney relate, that once when he was crossing the prairies, he came upon a flock of seven wild goats, and managed to come up with them upon a rocky platform which stood over a water-fall, the noise of which completely drowned that of his approach. The male was the sentinel, and was walking round and round the rock with five or six females after him. Presently, the wind changed, and they scented the colonel, when immediately there was a shrill scream and the seven animals disappeared like a dream. To run to the top of the rock and examine the country all around was the work of a very short time, but the animals were by that time half a mile off, and the baffled sportsman had the mortification of seeing them disappear from sight in the mouth of a ravine to which there was no visible approach. How they managed to escape from the

rock it was impossible to tell. Could it be possible that they had leapt the fifty yards between the summit of the rock and the path whereby they had escaped? Neither the colonel nor his companion could tell. All that they could say was that it was miraculous and inexplicable.

Another day, Colonel Kearney met on the banks of the Missouri a herd of wild goats that had been attracted to the river by sheer thirst. A party of about a hundred and thirty Indians had surrounded them, and were driving them towards the stream, and there the poor brutes, who dreaded the water even more than the guns, almost all fell victims to their imprudence. "It was odd enough," said the colonel, "to see seventy-nine dead goats with their horns all in a row."

The wild goats often fell victims to the snares which the Indians offer to their curiosity, by concealing themselves behind trees and waving a piece of red cloth or a white handkerchief, which attracts the animal to within gun-shot.

Of all the Red Skins, the cleverest in hunting the wild goats are the Shoshones. When they have surrounded a herd, they drive them in such a manner as to get them in the midst of an open plain. Being mounted on capital horses, they then divide themselves into parties of three, and so pursue the animals in such a manner that whichever way the creatures turn they find three foes

before them. By this means they generally manage to bag the whole herd.

Among the passengers on board the steamer *Argo*, on board of which I crossed to New York in 1841, was a Swiss, a native of Appenzell, whose open countenance and pleasant manners had attracted me from the first. His cabin happened to be next mine, which I shared with a missionary, who was on his way to Canada to preach Catholicism to the Red Skins of the North. I soon became very intimate with the Swiss, and we spent a great deal of time in each other's company, on deck, and at table. Suffice it to observe that I had discovered in the Swiss an *alter ego*, a man of similar tastes to myself, and in whose company I took the greatest pleasure. He was as fond of sport as I was. Since leaving college he had resided with his father, a wealthy farmer, who lived near the foot of Mount St. Gothard, and there he had obtained the reputation of being one of the most adroit chamois hunters in the canton. M. Simonds had lost all his family, and was emigrating to the regions of the far west, where he intended to found a colony.

Arrived at New York, we separated with mutual regret. He went on straight to the backwoods, and I remained amid what is called civilisation. We promised to write to each other, and I even gave him my word that I would pay him a visit whenever I could discover the locality of

his log-hut. We both kept our promises faithfully.

In 1845, M. Simonds was settled on the slopes of the Masserne mountains, in the northern corner of the State of Arkansas, and for three years past he had entreated me to pay him a visit at "Appenzell Bottom." At last I determined to entrust myself to the railway and pay a visit to my American friend. Ten days after my departure from New York I arrived at Fayetteville, and next day, about sunset, my guide led me to the banks of a little lake surrounded by noble poplars, and thronged with splendid wild fowl of every description; at the further end of which was a very well built Swiss châlet. Surrounding this were some picturesque farm buildings, and this was the residence of my friend Simonds.

How pleased we were to meet one another once more, and how swiftly passed the hours which succeeded our reunion! My friend had a vast deal to tell me of the troubles he had had to encounter in settling himself and his colony in "Appenzell Bottom." Our conversation naturally turned upon hunting, and among other sports, my host promised me a hunt after the wild goats of the Masserne mountains. I had heard a great deal of the chamois-hunting of Europe, without ever having taken part in it, and the proposal delighted me vastly.

Some days afterwards, our preparations were

made, and it was arranged that we should join M. Simonds' shepherds, who were tending the flocks of sheep up the hills. We set out accordingly on a Sunday afternoon with the intention of sleeping at the farm of a neighbour situated about five miles from Appenzell Bottom. This farm belonged to a friend and compatriot of M. Simonds, who received us with frank and primitive hospitality.

Next morning, before the dawn, we started with our guns and dogs. The path which we followed was a winding one, and had been but little used. It was still dark, and our footsteps sounding through those lonely gorges put to flight the night birds, which, circling over our heads, disappeared in the darkness. The higher we mounted, the day seemed to rise with us. Our dogs flushed a few gelinottes (out of gun-shot) from some tufts of whortleberries which bordered the path. The day was far advanced when we reached the sheep-shealings of friend Simonds, which were situated on one of the platforms of the Masserne mountains. It was the custom every year for the shepherds of Appenzell Bottom to lead their flocks to pasture on this immense platform. In a sheltered spot they had built some huts which could scarcely be perceived, unless you were forewarned that they were there. These huts were arranged so that the flock could be encamped in the midst of them, to defend them from the coyotes, which were very numerous in those parts.

It was only by the smoke which issued from the roof of one of them that I could perceive the whereabouts of the huts. As we approached the threshold, we were received by one of the shepherds, who was waiting for us, having been warned of our arrival by a negro, whom M. Simonds had sent on with provisions and ammunition. The shepherd of the Masserne was a man in the full vigour of his age; he seemed to be about forty years old; his face was weather-beaten, and his long curly hair, falling upon his shoulders, gave him quite a wild appearance. His clothes were made of fur, and covered him from head to foot, making him look not very unlike a remarkably fine bear. He had remained in the hut to cook the supper for the other shepherds, and, shortly after our arrival, the others arrived, driving before them the whole flock of sheep, goats, alpacas, cows, and bulls. The shepherds were aided in their difficult task of keeping these flocks in order by a dozen large dogs. As soon as the herds were picketed for the night, everybody seemed to think of supper,—which consisted of some capital onion soup, a plate of boiled meat, and a glass of brandy.

A herd of nineteen wild goats had been sighted about five miles from the huts, feeding leisurely on a platform of the mountains, near a torrent which was fed by the snow of the Masserne chain. They had occupied this pasture for five days, and on that

very morning, shortly before mid-day, one of the shepherds had seen them peaceably crouched among the grass, and watched over by a sentinel who stood on duty at the top of a rock. It was decided on at once that, next morning, before day-break, we should go to the Devil's Peak, which was the name that the shepherds gave to the place which the goats were occupying.

It was a glorious morning, and by the time the rays of the sun lit up the tops of the Masserne chain we were all in our places. M. Simonds, myself, one of the shepherds, and a negro were posted in different parts of the platform. We waited in profound silence for about half an hour, and then, with the aid of my glass, I saw a goat about half a mile off jumping from a cliff, followed by five or six others, all eagerly on the look-out, their ears pricked up, their large eyes wide open, and their hoofs pawing the soil impatiently. On a sudden (by a phenomenon not uncommon on the Masserne mountains), we were surrounded by a thick fog; the heat was very great, and everything betokened the storm which was not long in coming. Before many minutes had elapsed, the thunder was growling all about us, and the rain pouring down in terrific showers. After a time, however, a breeze from the north carried the storm away, the sun reappeared, and the face of Nature reassumed its wonted calmness. Presently, I saw the shepherd who guided us on the

top of a little hill which commanded the platform, and a few seconds afterwards five detonations awoke the echoes of the mountain. The shepherd stood as still as a statue, but presently I saw him make a signal to me with his hand. I stood ready, but with a beating heart, when, immediately afterwards, I saw five wild goats bounding past within twenty paces of me. I aimed at one, and the gun missed fire, but with the second barrel my goat fell within a few feet of the precipice. The others escaped by a path along the rocks, and were soon out of sight. I ought to have congratulated myself on my good fortune, I suppose, in having killed one wild goat, but instead of doing so I found myself cursing the bad luck which had caused my first barrel to miss fire. Instead of one goat, I coveted two. M. Simonds had killed two goats, and his negro had knocked over another; but the animal had fallen over into the torrent, and was lost. As for the shepherd, the herd had not passed within gun-shot of him. However, we regained the huts, bearing with us three splendid wild goats.

THE PECCARY.

Almost every creature is terribly alarmed at the discharge of a gun, and if it escapes the mur-

derous lead, makes good its retreat as fast as it is able: the peccary alone of all created beings cannot be accused of that form of cowardice. I believe, indeed, that if, instead of the explosion of an ordinary gun, it were to be assailed by the eruption of a volcano, it would only have the effect of redoubling the rage of this fierce little creature, which seems to grow all the more courageous in proportion to the danger. This animal seems, indeed, to be quite destitute of all nervous terror, and although its average size is only about two feet in height, by forty inches long, it is nevertheless one of the most formidable animals in North America.

The peccary lives in flocks, numbering from ten to fifty. Its jaws are armed with fangs, like those of the wild boar, but more crooked, and consequently more formidable. These fangs are as sharp as a razor, and are from three to four inches long. The movements of the peccary are as rapid as those of the squirrel; and when he butts with his head, shoulders, and neck, the force of the attack is tremendous. Experience has taught sportsmen that the peccary attacks whatever comes in his way, either with or without provocation; so the best plan is to avoid a direct meeting. They rush in a body at whatever opposes them, and if you do not get out of the way the victory is likely to cost more than it is worth.

The peccary (*Dicotyles tajaçu*) certainly resembles both the domestic pig and the wild boar. In form, it is nearer the pig; but its bristles, which are sprinkled over the reddish skin, can be raised at will like the quills of the porcupine, and especially when it is angry. In this, it resembles the wild boar more nearly than any other species of the race. The bristles of the peccary are coloured in bands, the part nearest the skin being white, and the tips of a chocolate colour. The peccary has no tail; but the place where this appendage should be is occupied by a fleshy protuberance. Another remarkable peculiarity is, that the peccary has no navel in the place where that is usually found. On the back, just above the rump, there is a shapeless lump, which contains the musky liquor which the animal ejects when it is angry, a power which it has in common with the civet and the musk rat of South America. The fore-quarters, neck, and head of the peccary resemble those of the wild boar, but the hinder-quarters are more slenderly formed. The feet and legs are like those of the boar. The food which it most affects is composed of acorns, berries, roots, sugar-cane, grain, and reptiles of every description.

Whilst speaking of the habits and conformation of this animal, something ought to be said about its peculiar mode of sleeping. The lair of the peccary is usually to be found in the middle of a thick and impenetrable tuft of sugar-canes, growing in a

marshy place, around some lofty and venerable tree. The lightning seems to have a preference for these isolated oaks and maples, the giants of the Texan forests; and they are constantly to be found riven by the electric current, and stretched along the banks of the rivers, where they lie covered with creepers and wild vines. These trunks, which very commonly measure a dozen yards in circumference, are usually hollow, and serve the peccary for a nocturnal refuge. Every evening, they retire into the trunk of a tree, which will sometimes hold thirty of them. Each enters the tree backwards, and the last remains with his head outside, as if to mount guard.

The Texan planters wage a deadly war with the peccaries, not only for the damage which they cause to the fields, and the injuries which they inflict upon their dogs, but for the danger which they themselves incur in hunting them. As soon, therefore, as one of them has discovered a tree which is frequented by the peccaries, he makes arrangements for a species of hunt, which is highly amusing, though not destitute of peril. The best time for this is when the rain is falling, and there is a thick fog, for then the peccaries do not quit their lair. Half an hour before dawn, the sportsman, armed with his rifle and good store of cartridges, places himself in ambush near the tree, ready to fire as soon as the light permits him. As soon as he can see

the two bright eyes of the sentinel peccary, he takes good aim and fires. If the aim has been a good one, the brute leaps out of the hole and rolls over on the ground. Scarcely, however, has the hunter time to reload when a growl is heard, and two more eyes are visible in the place of the sentinel who has been compelled to vacate his post. A second shot is followed by the same result, and so on, until there is not a peccary left in the tree. It sometimes happens, however, that the peccaries, irritated by the frequent discharges, will make a rush from the tree, in which case the hunter has as much as he can do to take care of himself. If the shot does not succeed in dislodging one of the peccaries, and he lies dead, obstructing the aperture, the animal behind him, unable to find any other exit, pushes him out.

These creatures have no idea of danger, and their instinct does not warn them of it. One after another they meet it without fear. They never, however, advance to attack an enemy whom they cannot see, or if the hunter does not guide them towards him by moving the branches which conceal him, or by some noise. Incredible as these particulars may seem, I declare that this mode of hunting the peccary is followed by the inhabitants of Texas. At Canney Creek and Brazos Bottom, where, about 1848, the country was infested with peccaries, now-a-days, thanks to the exertions of

the planters and their friends, these Texan wild boars have become as rare as the European ones in the forests of the Old World.

I shall never forget the first adventure which happened to me in hunting for peccaries. I was staying at Canney Creek with a planter, whose brother was one of my best friends in New York. Mr. John Morgan had emigrated to Texas in 1837, with another brother, the youngest of the three, and his plantation was certainly the finest in the neighbourhood. I was a mere tyro in comparison with these hardy pioneers, and they took a pleasure in initiating me into the life of a trapper in that primitive country. I listened with a delight which I should find it impossible to describe to their stories of hunting adventure, the favourite theme of conversation with these dwellers in the backwoods.

The peccaries had lately done a vast amount of damage in the wheat and maize fields of the Morgans, who had vowed war to the knife. I must say that I entertained good hopes of sport when I heard them cursing and swearing as they pointed out the wounds which their dogs had accidentally received from the peccaries. I say accidentally, because no dog, if he knows it, will willingly encounter the Texan wild boar. One morning Mr. John Morgan, coming home to breakfast, told us that he had been that morning to examine the damage which had been done to a field of maize by a bear

and a herd of peccaries. He soon came upon the track of the bear, and, as he was following it out, he came right upon the peccaries, who were sharpening their tusks upon his Indian corn and cutting it all round them as clean as if with a sickle. It was too late to retreat honourably, for the peccaries had seen him, and as usual, charged at him full tilt. There was no time even to fire his gun, so Mr. Morgan had nothing for it but to take to his heels as fast as he could. Fortunately, he reached a wooden fence before the peccaries overtook him, and climbing up to the topmost bar he managed to perch upon it, whilst the peccaries attacked the supports of the fence with their tusks, ripping them up as fast as they could. Mr. Morgan now opened fire, and had rolled over several peccaries, when he felt the fence give way under his feet, and before he knew where he was, he had rolled over among some sugar canes on the other side. Once more he had to take to flight, leaving the peccaries on the other side, and fortunately he managed to reach the house without having them at his heels again.

As soon as we had finished our breakfast, we sallied out, all three mounted on horseback, and preceded by a black with a large cow's horn, which he sounded every now and then, "to frighten dem nasty pigs," as he said. We had a noble pack of dogs with us, well trained to hunt bears, and of a cross between the bull-dog and the hound. Their

coats bore many a scar of wounds inflicted by the tusks of the peccaries and the formidable claws of the bears. We all advanced towards the spot where the game was supposed to be, whilst Mr. Morgan gave me his advice what to do in case we should happen to come upon the peccaries. Above all things, he advised me not to resist, but to fly, unless indeed I wished to have my horse hamstrung and my own legs ripped up. I promised prudence, but the joyous cry of the dogs soon dissipated from my mind all fear of the dangerous character of the game which we were about to attack. Presently we reached some sugar-canes, and our horses could scarcely make a way through the interlacing creepers and vines which blocked up the way. We followed the hounds as well as we could, until presently a terrible roar was heard, far above the barking of the dogs. We knew then that the dogs were on the bear, and each of us took the road which he thought most likely to lead to the scene of action. The horse on which I was mounted dashed through the thickest of the cover, capering about in a manner which required all my skill as a horseman to prevent him from unseating me. The bear was keeping the dogs at bay close to me, but I could not get a glimpse of him, and I could hear him rush by without being able so much as to see him, by reason of the thick curtain of foliage which concealed him from sight. At that moment, my horse

grew perfectly furious, and it was impossible for me to guide him, for I felt myself almost lifted from my saddle by the creepers which hung about on all sides; fortunately, however, I had the presence of mind to grip him firmly, and I regained my seat without thinking much of the bruises which I had gained in the struggle. Immediately after this, the bear, having met three of my companions in his path, returned towards me, pursued by the dogs, and forcing his way through the canes and creepers. My horse was then seized with a more lively terror than before, and plunging about, soon entangled me in a net which would have defied Samson or Hercules himself. The bear passed by again, pursued hotly by the dogs, who were in a terrible rage. At this spectacle, my horse backed still further into the thicket, and I had great difficulty in keeping my seat. I lost one of the sleeves of my coat, and the remnants were left upon the points of a sugar-cane, but I contrived to disengage my arm, and, drawing my bowie-knife, managed to cut myself clear of the net in which I was caught. As I could now hear the howling and barking of the dogs, and the growls of the bear keeping his foes at bay, I made the best of my way to the scene of combat, which I found at the foot of an immense tree. I could hear the voices of my friends, who were pressing, like me, towards the scene of action.

At the same moment, Mr. John Morgan and I

made our way through the canes which separated us, and in the midst of a clear space, about twelve yards across, we found the bear at bay at the foot of the tree. The dogs, taking fresh courage from the arrival of their masters, at once rushed on the enemy and quite covered him with their bodies. Neither Mr. Morgan nor myself could fire, for fear of killing one of the dogs. Meantime, the bear was dashing off the dogs to the right and left, when, suddenly, the whole party (bear, dogs, hunters, and all) was charged by a herd of peccaries. No one can imagine the scene of confusion which ensued,—the cries, howls, and general rush from the scene. The dogs fled with their tails between their legs; the bear, maddened with the bites which he had received, alone held his ground, and by the liberal use of teeth and claws distributed death around. "Off with you, all," cried Mr. Morgan; and his brother and the negro were not slow to echo the cry. Thanks to the swiftness of our steeds, we were not long in regaining Mr. Morgan's plantation, and when I once got safely home, I carefully folded up the remnants of my shooting-jacket as a relic of my first encounter with the peccaries of North America.

Not very long after this adventure, I happened to embark on board a steamer at Galveston, on my way to New Orleans. In the evening, a Texan trapper, who was seated in the cabin with his friends around him, all plentifully supplied with brandy

punch, told them a story about peccaries, which I take the liberty of reproducing here, word for word :—

"One evening (said the Texan), I was a shootin' with a friend in Trinity Swamp. You know that we planters are very fond of sport, and my friend and self spent every day with our guns in our hands. One morning, happening near a wood, I met a herd of peccaries. I had no notion then of the vengeful nature of these darned wild pigs, so I fired at two of 'em, and killed 'em. In a minnit, the hull herd was on me, cuttin' at me with their sharp tusks. I defended myself as well as I cud with the butt end of my rifle, but as soon as one was knocked over another kem up to take his place. I soon got tired o' this, and med my way to a tree close by, and climbin' on a branch, I managed to climb up to a fork about six yards above the sile. I must confess, I didn't like my position. One, two, three hours passed, but no help kem. The pigs, as mad as cud be, surrounded the tree on which I was perched, and did not show the slightest inclination to skedaddle. All on a sudden, the notion came into my 'ed that p'raps my friend was looking out for me, and that if I fired off my rifle he would cum up to my assistance. Then it struck me that it was no use burnin' powder for nothin', and that I might just as well kill one of the darned pigs as not. So I rolled one over straight off. When I'd done this, it struck me that, as I'd got

twenty bullets left, and I could only count nineteen peccaries round the tree, I might just as well kill 'em all off, one after the other, just as I'd done the first. And so I did. I began a loadin' and firin' as fast as I cud, and as the varmint rolled over, I gave a tremendous 'hurrah!' which woke up the echoes I ken tell you. At last, up comes my friend, just as I had shot the last peccary, and you may suppose how skeered he was at seeing what had taken place, and the critters all lyin' dead." The crowd which had collected round the Texan, evidently took the greatest interest in this story, and congratulated the hunter on his extraordinary skill with the rifle.

Two months afterwards, I happened to be going down the Mississippi from St. Louis and New Orleans on board the steamer *Black Eagle*, and the very same Texan was on board. In the evening, sitting round the stove, the passengers were talking politics, commerce, and sporting, and you may be sure my Texan did not forget his peccaries. The reader may guess my surprise at hearing the story with the following variation:—"One, two, three hours passed, but no help kem. I got very onaisy both in mind and body, but just as I had moved a little to make my seat easier, I lost my balance and fell. Fort'nately for me, I dropped my rifle, and caught hold of a branch, and there I hung. This was very okkard, for my feet hung within five feet of the sile, and I cud see the peccaries jumpin' up to catch hold of

'em. Fort'nately they cudn't reach, and I thought I was safe; but only see the cunning of those critters. Several of them lay down on their bellies, and others got upon their backs, so as to form a platform, from which a big peccary jumped up, and seized me by the heel of the right boot. I kicked at him with the other fut, like a horse, and whilst we were strugglin', the other peccaries rolled from under him, and left him hangin' on to my heel by his tusks, whilst his friends were gruntin' away like mad all round. They made a most infernal nize, and as my arms were gettin' tired, I was skeered at thinkin' the moment must soon cum when I should have to drop. On a sudden, a gun went off close to, and the nize was so great that I let go, tumblin' slick on to the dead peccary. My friend had kem up, and had knocked it clean over. I picked up my rifle, and together we soon bagged five-and-twenty o' the darned pigs." This story was told with the most imperturbable gravity, and with all the action and expression proper to the narration of so exciting an incident. The bystanders, and especially those who were not very familar with forest life, were quite moved by it.

Fifteen days later, by a strange chance, I met my friend once more—this time on board the *Red Rover*, returning to St. Louis. He was surrounded by a group of Kentuckians, and was spinning hunting yarns to them at a great rate. I joined the listeners, and

to my unbounded astonishment, overheard one more version of the peccary story:—"One, two, three hours passed, but no help kem, and I felt my strength giving way. I cud have managed to kill all the pigs, but unfort'nately my rifle had dropped! What cud I do? I was about to give it up in despair, and jump down among the critters, to try what a rush would do, when my friend appeared on the scene. D'rectly he saw me in so dangerous a position, he never thought of the consequences to himself, but aimed at the biggest peccary, and killed it dead. Sune as he did this, the hull herd turned round and rushed at him, gruntin' furiously. In order to save hisself, my friend had to do as I did, so he dropped his rifle, and climbed up the nearest tree. On this, I kem down, while the peccaries were jumpin round the foot of the tree up which my friend had got, and, getting to my rifle, I loaded it, and killed another of 'em. Then they kem at me full pelt; but I was up the tree like a squir'l, and my friend kem down, got his rifle, and did 'xactly as I had done; and so on we went, until (would you believe it, sirs?) we had done this fifteen times each, and I had killed fifteen peccaries, and my friend fifteen. Yes, indeed, we bagged the thirty peccaries between us."

The fertile imagination of this Texan certainly beat everything of the kind I had ever heard. I asked the captain of the steamer what he knew of

this Munchausen of the backwoods, and he told me that he was from the Wabash, which is pretty much as if we were to say in France that a man came from Gascony.

VIRGINIAN DEER.

On the shores of South Carolina, to the south of Charleston, there is a splendid island called Edisto, a large portion of which is planted with the celebrated Sea Island cotton, but which is covered on the northern extremity with an immense forest filled with every description of game. The colonists, who inhabit the houses and farms surrounded by tracts of cultivated land which cover this island, are among the kindest and most hospitable people whom I met with during my stay in the United States; and the elegant cottages which they frequent during the fine season of the year (autumn and winter) contain everything that is comfortable and desirable. Life at Edisto has always seemed to me comparable only with that which Hannibal and his soldiers led at Capua. As for me, I frankly admit that I never spent happier days than those which I passed with my hospitable entertainers at Schooley's Mansion; and should they ever see these words, I trust that Mr. Dallifold and his family will accept them as a sincere expression of my gratitude. Let the reader

picture to himself a charming house, built of brick, and painted rosy white, the colour of the magnolia. A verandah, painted green and supported by columns draped with creepers, completely surrounded the house, which was shaded with vegetation, like a humming-bird's nest in a bush of sweet-scented acacias. The balmy odours of the orange and lemon trees were rendered all the more agreeable by their admixture with the warm sea-breezes. Golden pheasants, and many kinds of Chinese and Japanese game, thronged the lawn, fed by the hands of pretty creole girls; and in the reservoirs of salt water, to which the waves of the sea had access every tide, fish of every kind were sporting about, perfectly acclimatised, and enduring their captivity very happily.

I had brought with me to this Eden an excellent gun, by Lepage,—a gun which had served me well upon many a sporting expedition; and on the morning after my arrival at Edisto, I took with me a negro belonging to the plantation, and sallied forth to survey the ground. In about a couple of hours, I saw many flocks of wild duck, a great many pheasants, about a dozen turkeys, two deer, and (better than all) a lynx, of the kind called the catamount, or cat-o'-mountain, one of the most gluttonous of the North American carnivora. I had killed my share of this game, and altogether, when we returned to Mr. Dallifold's cottage, a dozen head hung from the shoulders of Adonis, who acted as game-carrier.

During breakfast, my host proposed to me to join himself and some friends in a grand hunt on the Island of St. John, close to Edisto, where the woods harboured large herds of the Virginian deer.* The proposal was a most agreeable one, and I accepted it with many thanks. In the course of the day, my host collected several of his neighbours, and next day, at five in the morning (it was on the 25th of January, 1843), we were embarked in a sloop, and crossed the strait which separates Edisto from St. John's, landing close to a little house which served as stable and cattle-shed for some men who had charge of a troop of mustangs belonging to Mr. Dallifold.

The hounds were coupled, the horses saddled, and the breakfast served up on a rustic table, covered with a white cloth. When we had satisfied our appetites, which had been sharpened by the brisk sea-air, every one sallied out to choose his mount. One of the party was M. de L———, an ex-deputy

* This is the generic name, or family title, which the learned Audubon has bestowed upon the noble creature which Gaston, Phœbus, and so many other writers on sport, have described in their writings. It is worth noticing, however, that the deer of the United States (*Cariacus Virginianus*) is of about the same dimensions and colour of fur as the European red deer. The main point of distinction between it and the latter is to be found in the shape of the horns, which, instead of being arranged like those of the European animal, are bent so as to describe a curve, with the point turned over the muzzle: so that, to explain better this freak of nature, we may say that our deer fight by raising the head, but the American animals employ the contrary method, and strike downwards like the hammer on the anvil.

of one of our departments in the time of Louis-Philippe and during the Republic of 1848. He accompanied his brother-in-law, a planter of Edisto. M. de L——— had married a very pretty American creole; and his sight was so bad that, during the hunt, he mistook a colt for a deer, and rolled it over stone dead, with its hoofs in the air, at a distance of forty yards.

The party numbered six, and we started, preceded by the blacks, who held the dogs in leash. After cantering for about six miles, we arrived at a place in the forest where three roads met. There we drew up, to wait for four other gentlemen from Edisto whom we had appointed to meet.

One of these was an old sportsman, and he had brought no rifle with him; for, said he, "Deer are not properly in season, excepting between July and December.* I shan't burn any powder on them, but I can't resist the pleasure of seeing the fun, so I've stretched a little the oath I have taken never to hunt in the close season." About the middle of the day, one of the deer grazed the boots of this old sportsman with his horns, but he contented himself with administering a shower of kicks to the poor brute, which soon made it take refuge in the thicket. Six of us had double-barrelled guns loaded with buck-shot, and each carried his weapon on the

* In certain provinces of the United States there are game laws, which forbid the hunting of the deer during six months of the year.

saddle-bow. Mr. Dallifold's chief huntsman, a black named Hector, led the way. This African Nimrod was an odd creature, and I shall never forget his wrinkled face, crisp white hair, and thick under-lip, hanging so low as to leave the white teeth distinctly visible,—white, in spite of the constant habit of chewing tobacco, which he had practised for sixty years.* From his earliest youth, Hector had been a sportsman, and his master had made him huntsman-in-chief to Schooley's Mansion. Looking at his bright eye, slender wiry legs covered with boots with spurs, and seeing him mounted on his pony, with its small saddle, and his feet in the enormous stirrups, it was easy to guess that he knew what he was about, and that we should not go home with empty bags.

"Well, Hector, what news? Shall we have a good day of it?" said my host to his slave.

"Berry well," quoth Hector, in his queer dialect. "Me show big stag; but the buckras must shoot straight."

"That's well, old boy, let go the dogs and on with you. Come on, gentlemen, load your rifles and take your places."

In a few minutes, the hounds were uncoupled, and we had great difficulty in following them straight at a gallop, as they hunted up the scent which Hector

* The blacks very frequently begin chewing at ten years of age. Hector was really seventy years old.

had put them on. At last, after turning a rock, the pack dashed into the wood, and obeying a signal which had been previously arranged, we placed ourselves at about fifty yards' distance from each other.

I took shelter under an enormous oak, where I stood so sheltered by the branches that no one could see me. Straight before me was an open riding, and altogether it seemed a very favourable position for getting a chance at a deer. A feeling came over me which every sportsman will readily understand, the feeling of eagerness mingled with fear, as I balanced the chances of getting a deer within shot against those of having a stray ball through my own head.

Suddenly, the brushwood was parted about twenty yards off, and a magnificent "stag of ten" walked into the middle of the alley as placidly and securely as you please. I was seized with a fit of nervous agitation (in the States they call it *stag fever*) when I found myself so close to the splendid game. I raised my gun mechanically and pulled the trigger, when lo! the beautiful vision had disappeared, and there was nothing but vacancy. On the wings of the wind the stag had rushed between two others of the party. Their double shots were as vain as mine had been, and off he sallied into the open, making the best of his way from so noisy, if not dangerous, a neighbourhood.

The dogs soon recovered the scent, and we were at their heels. Now was the time for a grand display

of horsemanship. Every one understood that the deer was trying to reach the other end of the forest, and the proper plan to prevent him from effecting his object was by getting before him, so as to bar his way. In front of all was a hunter who galloped on with a rapidity which none of us could equal. I saw him take aim and fire, but the deer was not touched. He merely gave a bound and resumed his course towards the forest, the explosion only making him go quicker. There was another chance for the hunter, and that was to drive him towards a hollow which it was impossible to leap. He determined on this, for we saw him put spurs to his horse and gallop on towards the margin of the wood; but he reached it only at the moment when the deer crossed his path, about a hundred yards ahead. We lost sight of both hunter and deer, and then the sound of a shot awoke the echoes. We all rushed on as if to see who should be first, and when we got to our friend a sad spectacle met our eyes. Before us was the poor horse in the agonies of death, and a few yards off the deer belling forth its last agony.

How could this have happened? In the heat of the chase, the hunter had tried to leap over a dwarf pine, behind which was the trunk of an old tree sticking up like a spear, and the unhappy horse, falling upon this, had impaled itself. The hunter had been thrown off a short distance, without being

much hurt, and on regaining his footing, with his rifle in his hand, he had fired at the deer at ten yards' distance, and had bowled it over.

When old Hector came up, he kissed the poor horse, and declaimed its funeral oration; but Mr. Dallifold soon relieved him of this untimely sensibility by ordering him to seek another scent. Two friends of the dismounted hunter offered to keep him company until the arrival of the blacks to carry off the game and the saddle and bridle of the horse. The rest of us pursued our chase towards the centre of the forest, where the underwood was so thick that we could scarcely see the rays of the sun. Axe had never touched these giants of the greenwood, and if Robin Hood had ever visited America, he could have desired no better retreat for himself and his bold band.

Hector led the way, and at length cried a halt. He was searching for a slot, and whilst the dogs were drawing, we profited by the opportunity to lunch. Capital cold meats and some excellent claret soon restored both our strength and our good humour.

"Mount, gentlemen," cried Mr. Dallifold, "Hector and his dogs have got another deer."

Sure enough, our feet were scarcely in the stirrups when a herd of six does and a stag passed within twenty yards in front of us, followed close by the entire pack, all in full cry. There were seven of us,

each with a double-barrelled rifle, and the discharge was simultaneous. When the smoke cleared off there were five does and "a stag of ten" rolling in the agonies of death. The seventh, wounded in the lungs, had been able to continue its flight, but we found it dead close to the shore, and not far from the place where we re-embarked for Schooley's Mansion.

It was very late when we quitted St. John's, and the moon lit up the track of our canoe as we were rowed over to Edisto. Our spoils were heaped up across the prow.

As we ate our supper at Mr. Dallifold's, every guest had a long hunting-story to tell. One of these, illustrating the law which forbids hunting deer at night and with a torch (a method of poaching much practised in the States), is quite worthy of being quoted.

One autumn evening, about three years ago, the air was fresh, even to coldness, and although the stars were shining brightly enough, there was a penetrating dampness which condensed into fog, and fell in thick drops upon the trees which were planted thickly around the country mansion of my friend Rensom, the richest planter in South Carolina, and who is well known to all this company. My friend's overseer was talking in the front of the house to a black who had just brought a letter:—

"So you've come from Charleston, and went to

see the massa. Why did you tell him, you little rascal, that it was the deer that came every night to eat his beans?"

"Massa Slouch," cried the young rogue, showing his teeth. "I no tell massa dat."

"Don't you tell a lie, Cæsar. You wanted to get a shilling, although I told you not to tell anybody. I'll make you pay for it. Be off and send Pompey here."

The fellow did not wait to be ordered off a second time, but bounded off towards the cottages of the blacks, built at the upper end of a green meadow towards the north of the plantation. A few minutes afterwards Pompey appeared before the overseer, who ordered him to go and pick up some fir-cones, and prepare everything for hunting deer by torch-light that night.

"But," objected Pompey, "when massa Rensom come to-morrow, he will say we 've been hunting on our own account."

"What's that to you? You say you know nothing about it. If you don't, I'll tell the master of those four deer you killed and sold at Charleston. So you just hold your tongue, my lad."

Pompey hadn't a word to say to that, for he was an arrant poacher, and he very soon promised to have everything ready for the evening's sport.

An hour after sunset the overseer, accompanied by his sable henchman (who carried a sack of fir

cones and a small stove), rode off, mounted on a horse, caparisoned with a large sheep-skin under the saddle. He had a rope with a large hook attached to it which was intended to drag the game, after it had been captured.

"Here we are," cried old Pompey, "it will soon be dark, and in less than half an hour the stags will be here."

Whilst the overseer was looking to his rifle, Pompey suspended the stove from a tree, and filling it full of fir-cones, set fire to them. "Now gib me de gun, Massa Slouch, and I'll show you how kill de stag."

"No, I shan't," replied the overseer, "I shall shoot the deer myself. I can't trust you."

"As you please, Massa; only Pompey clebberer dan you tink fur. However, let us keep quiet, or we shall frighten de deer."

Without further delay, the two poachers concealed themselves in the shade, carefully keeping out of the bright rays which the fire in the stove threw around. Presently, at about fifty paces off they could see a fine stag quietly browsing among Mr. Rensom's beans. Slouch had, however, no time to take aim, before the animal made a tremendous bound, and disappeared.

"Tarnation!" roared the overseer, "There's a fine chance lost. However, we'll see if that fellow hadn't a companion."

Silence was resumed, and the two continued creeping along the bean-field as quietly as possible on all-fours. Presently the overseer jogged the black upon the shoulder with his heel, and both stopped still. Fifty paces off, in the full light of the fire, was a stag quite as big as the other, standing as still as Albert Durer's stag in "The Vision of St. Hubert." It would have been highly imprudent to advance another step, so Slouch raised his rifle, and, taking careful aim, pulled the trigger. The stag gave a tremendous bound, and fell dead. The report woke up all the echoes of the neighbourhood, and the owls which were perched up among the trees, fled alarmed at the unaccustomed noise. To disembowel the creature, fasten it by the four feet, and throw it over the crupper, was the business of a quarter of an hour. This operation took place in silence, and when it was finished, Pompey took the horse by the bridle, and led the way back again to the house. Suddenly a noise made them both stop, and Slouch, who had reloaded his rifle, saw the form of an animal and two bright eyes running from the opposite direction. He presented and fired, when Pompey, rushing forward, exclaimed—"Oh! what hab you done? You shot Mr. Rensom's pet colt." In fact, Slouch had killed a magnificent two-year-old stone dead. The ball had struck it full in the middle of the neck.

"What shall we do?" cried Slouch. "If we bury the brute, the smell will soon betray us, and if we throw it in the pond, it will be exactly the same thing. Ah! I know. You lend me a hand, Pompey, and no one will be a bit the wiser."

The two poachers dragged the carcase towards a dense thicket, and hoisted the colt upon it, impaling it by the wound which the ball had made upon a sharp spike of wood.

"To-morrow," said Slouch, "the eagles and buzzards will have had their share, and by night no one will be a bit the wiser how the colt died. Everybody will think that he was staked in trying to jump the hedge. Now you take the deer to Jack the coachman, and tell him to book it on to Charleston, to the address you know of. Be off with you; there'll be a dollar and two pound of 'bacca for your share. Take Mr. Rensom's mare with you, and then she can't go hunting after her colt."

The two poachers separated, and whilst Slouch, the dishonest overseer, was sleeping quietly, Pompey, obeying orders, was mounted on the mare, taking the venison on its way to Charleston Market. That done, Pompey was on his way back again towards his master's house, when, suddenly, the mare shied and threw him. There was an explosion of a gun, and then fearful groans disturbed the stillness of the night. To jump upon his feet, and run in the

direction of the noise, was immediately the instinct of Pompey. There, before him, at the foot of a tree, lay a man on the point of death, and in him Pompey recognised his brother Cæsar, mortally wounded by a rifle ball, and bathed in his own blood. In broken words, Cæsar told his brother that, having occasion to seek the aid of a doctor for his wife, he had started off for that purpose. On arriving close to the bean-field, he had found the fire still burning. Curiosity had attracted him towards the spot, and when, in spite of the resistance of his horse, he got up to the hedge, a gun went off, and he felt that he was hit by a bullet. In reply to his cry of agony, a poacher rushed forward to help him, and entreated him, on his knees, to pardon the fatal mistake. He had taken the mule for a stag; but, as he was in the midst of his explanations, Pompey and his mare came up, and the poacher had fled.

The accident proved fatal to Cæsar, and it had such an effect upon Pompey, that he made a full confession to Mr. Rensom, when that gentleman arrived next day, of everything that had happened. Slouch was dismissed, and as he could get no satisfactory character, soon embarked for California. Pompey was promoted to succeed him, by no means to Mr. Rensom's disadvantage.

I have another story of the kind, in which I played the part of hero myself. One fine autumn

day (this is a common opening with romances, but this is a true story), in the year 1841, I found myself at a tavern kept by an Irishman, on the banks of Big Wolf Lake, in the northern part of New York State. I had arranged with a gentleman farmer, whose acquaintance I had made at Newport, during the bathing season, to pass a fortnight with him, hunting deer, and according to Mr. Eustis (who was a charming companion whether in the field or at table), the sport around Crow's Nest was of such a character, that I should have no difficulty whatever in bagging a dozen or so of roe-bucks.* For my part, the dozen head (two *per diem*), would have amply satisfied me; but four a day seemed a little too strong, and I became desirous of knowing whether Mr. Eustis had not been shooting a little with the long bow, and whether he had not estimated the qualities of his territory a little too highly.

It was a fine October day when I arrived at Crow's Nest, and Mr. Eustis received me with true American hospitality. The mistress of the

* The roe-buck differs from his European congener in the colour of his fur, which is of a uniform and very handsome tinge of red; the belly is gray, and the tail short and white, planted in a square of the same colour. The horns are much the same, only that the antlers are flatter and more indented, and are bent so as to describe a semi circle, curving over the animal's muzzle. As for the legs, body, and its attributes of lightness and vivacity there is no difference between them. As in Europe, they go about in herds; the rutting season is similar; they shed their horns about December, and are in the highest state of perfection in June and July.

house, a native of Baltimore (a city which boasts of having the best blood in the United States), soon put me at my ease, treating me quite as a brother; and this friendship was all the more readily cemented by the familiarity which I struck up with the charming little son of my worthy host and his wife, who seemed at once to receive me into his affections. Mrs. Eustis was seated on my arrival before an amply furnished table, spread with cold meat, boiled eggs, muffins, and hot cakes made of wheat and Indian corn. Everything was admirably cooked and served, and the welcome was warmer and better than anything.

The eight days which I spent at Crow's Nest seem like an oasis in the midst of a journey filled with danger and difficulty. The first day was spent in walking about. In the evening, we had a chat about a hunt for the next day, and the talk at the tea-table had been prolonged until after ten o'clock, an unusual hour, where early going to bed and early rising are the order of the day. Next morning, we were all busily engaged with our breakfast, when there came a ring at the bell. David, the black servant, answered it, and presently returned with intelligence that the locksmith had arrived "with the lanterns." "I know what it is," cried the host. David soon showed in the Crow's Nest locksmith, who came up with a couple of lanterns, the only peculiarities about which were, that they were hol-

lowed out below so as to fit upon the head, and that the insides of the lanterns were furnished with powerful reflectors.

"What are you going to do with these?" said I, examining this apparatus, the use of which I certainly did not understand.

"You don't mean to say you don't understand," cried Mr. Eustis; "Now try and see if you can't guess the use of these lanterns."

So saying, the farmer mounted one of the lanterns atop of his head, and buckled the straps under his chin. I could not help bursting with laughter, but my friend cried, "Never mind; when night comes, you won't laugh. I see you don't understand how this is to be used, and so much the worse for you. I shan't explain it to you. But, now, we'll start." So, off we went, with hearts as gay as possible, my friend telling his wife that she need not expect us home again before midnight, or two o'clock in the morning, at the earliest.

Mr. Eustis's house was at the end of a creek in Big Wolf Lane, and was surrounded by cedars, lofty oaks, and tufted nut-trees, and was altogether an admirable retreat for a sportsman. Plantations to the right; fields to the left, surrounded by trees planted like a *chevaux-de-frise* (so as to prevent the game from making too large inroads upon the plantations of maize, potatoes, yams, wheat, and barley); a beautiful lake before the house, fifteen miles long

by three broad, the banks fringed with rushes, thickly frequented by herons, bitterns, grebes, water-hens, pochards, geese and ducks of every kind, including the famous *canvas-back*,—the monarch of the web-footed denizens of the States. Altogether, Crow's Nest was one of the best "shooting boxes" I saw in the States.

A boat was waiting for us at the head of the creek, about a gun-shot from the farm. David was there, holding on to the shore, and waiting for us. As soon as we embarked, Mr. Eustis took the helm, and gave the word to push off. In a short time, freeing ourselves from the rushes and the water-lilies, we reached the open water, and rowed vigorously northwards.

As I stated at the beginning of this story, it was a fine autumn day, the sun shone brightly in the sky, and the water-birds were sporting before us when we arrived at the Irishman's little house. We had bagged about twenty head, of sorts, which an excellent spaniel had retrieved for us in first-rate style. Pat Donoghue (or, as he was commonly called, Pat), kept this little place, which was a house of call for the quicksilver miners of the neighbourhood, and he had the reputation for being the best sportsman in the country.

"Good day to Mr. Eustis and his friends," cried he, tugging at his fox-skin cap. "Ye're jist in time, gentlemen. I've sighted three herds of

deer this very morning in the 'Devil's Hole,' and they're not less than twenty head. Hurrah!" cried Pat, on perceiving the japanned tin lanterns, "Here we are; and now we'll see how these will suit 'em."

"Not another word," said Mr. Eustis; "I want to give my French friend a surprise, so don't you say a word until I tell you."

"All right!" cried he, and, without more ado, whistled to a couple of hounds and led the way towards a difficult path, which led from Big Wolf to Devil's Hole. The path was abrupt, narrow, tortuous, steep, and sometimes dangerous, but no accident occurred during this walk of about an hour and a half. The cedars being so close, rendered the passage very difficult, but we managed to force our way, and presently we found ourselves at an opening, where were about fifteen deer, some browsing, some lying down, and all on the watch.

"Now, my French Nimrod," whispered Mr. Eustis, "what say you to this? You've only to hold straight and shoot fair. Now, look out; we've three guns. Pat, you shoot to the left, I'll blaze at the centre, and you, dear sir, shoot to the right. Now, take your time. I'll count up to twenty, and then fire."

Each took his place and presently the three guns went off, followed by two more shots, the second barrels of Mr. Eustis and myself. "Bravo!" cried

Mr. Eustis, jumping up and contemplating the work of our hands. Four stags lay bleeding on the green sward of the clearing. The fifth shot had not been so successful as the others. I was the criminal in this case, and I must admit that my excitement had somewhat paralysed me. I had hit the stag in the left thigh instead of upon the neck, and the creature had made off as fast as his three legs could carry him, with Pat's hounds close to his track, all belling and giving tongue splendidly. We stood for a moment looking at our four victims—two stags, a doe and a fawn—and then giving Pat due charge to disembowel the game and hang it up by the branches, so as to be out of reach of the beasts of prey, Mr. Eustis and myself followed up the traces of the dogs. Pursuing them closely through the cover, it soon became evident to us that the wounded animal was seeking its way towards the lake, and presently we perceived the reflection of the water before us. Here the stag was to be brought to bay, and we should have the pleasure of seeing this spectacle take place in the water. The stag was standing half-immersed in the water and fought the dogs very feebly. It was evidently all over with him, and in a short time he succumbed. We rushed up and dragged him from the water, and then I had leisure to examine and admire the handsomest deer I ever saw in my life. His horns were perfect in their regularity, and of a beautiful grain; his

skin was a reddish brown, varying in innumerable shades.

From Pat's tavern to where the deer was killed, the distance was barely half a mile. By the aid of Mr. Eustis's servant, who was at the tavern, we landed the game, and when Pat came back with a mule laden with the four deer we had killed, the supper was all ready for us. Eustis and myself had been the chief cooks, and a capital meal we had contrived with broiled venison steaks, liberally powdered with salt and pepper.

As soon as evening arrived, we thought of our hunt by night, which was to make such an immense impression upon "the inexperienced young Frenchman," who was "so great a lover of sport." I let them talk on, and when I saw Mr. Eustis taking up the two lanterns, both fully equipped with oil and wicks, I held my tongue and contented myself with following my leader. Mr. Eustis led the way with Pat and David, and we all got into the canoe.

It was a dark night, but our sight soon grew accustomed to the obscurity, and we hadn't been on the lake long before we had "cats' eyes" for seeing in the dark. The blacks rowed with all their might, and in half an hour we arrived at the further end of a deep creek surrounded with cedars and fir trees. "Now for it," cried Mr. Eustis; "let us light up and it's all over with Mr. Deer." I had no idea of what he was about to do, but I had resolved to hold my

tongue and ask no questions; presently, however, I saw Mr. Eustis light up his lantern and fasten it upon his head, buckling the straps under his chin. I could hardly help bursting out with laughter, but when my host had explained to me that all wild animals, without exception, are attracted by a light in the middle of the night, I understood the purpose of the lanterns. "So now, my friend," cried Eustis, "put on your lantern and get ashore." I obeyed the order mechanically, whilst Pat and David pushed the canoe towards the bank. At that moment, by one of those annoying accidents which sometimes happen, the clouds cleared away from the moon, and the forest was as bright as in the day time. Mr. Eustis, however, declared that this would make no difference, so on we went. He was not far wrong, either, for we had scarcely walked on for ten minutes before we saw a splendid deer trotting up to meet us full in the face. I aimed, and at twenty paces fired. The deer gave a leap and fell dead. "Bravo!" cried Mr. Eustis. Pat and David carried the game to the boat. "Now for my turn," cried Mr. Eustis, "and St. Hubert grant me as good luck as he has you." The aspiration was soon realised, for we had not proceeded far before coming upon a herd of seven deer, does and stags, all on the look out, as if curious to ascertain the meaning of the unusual light. We both took aim at the same moment, and whilst I covered a splendid stag, with a noble set of

branches, Mr. Eustis took aim at a fine doe. The reports were heard at the same moment, and Mr. Eustis had rolled over his game. Somehow or other, I had only hit mine in the shoulder, and off he went with the rest of the herd into the depths of the forest. We lost no time in finding our way to Patrick's tavern, and re-embarking for home. The weight of the game was sufficient to sink the gunwale of the canoe within a handsbreadth of the water. Next day, Pat arrived with the news that he had found the deer that I had wounded, but he was so eaten by the wolves that he could bring us nothing but the head and a splendid set of horns.

I will conclude this chapter with an anecdote. The Virginian deer is capable of being tamed, and in support of this I will cite one example out of many. One morning, during my stay in New York, in 1841, I was greatly amazed at seeing a splendid stag marching in the midst of a company of militia. He had a fine silver collar on his neck, his haunches were splendid, his eyes full of gentleness, and his gait proud and noble. He marched behind the band at the head of the officers, and neither the cries of children nor the noise of the vehicles, nor even the clangour of the musical instruments, seemed to have the slightest effect on the creature. My curiosity was excited to ascertain the history of the animal, and also that of a splendid Newfoundland dog that walked by his side, and this

is what I heard from the lips of an officer of the Third New York Highland Brigade.

This company of Highlanders (in imitation of the custom of the mother country) had adopted the stag as the emblem of that lightness and agility with which a Highlander climbs mountains and traverses plains. The dog was an emblem of fidelity; and it is worth mentioning here, that during the War of Independence, the American Highlanders gave their leader, Washington, remarkable proofs of activity and courage, which caused the republican general to confer upon them certain privileges which they have continued to hold uninterruptedly since 1781.

At the battle of Yorktown, when General Cornwallis, attacked on one side by the American troops under Washington, and on the other by the French fleet under Count de Grasse, was obliged to surrender with seven thousand men, the Captain of the third brigade of Highlanders, one John Davidson, was deputed to receive the sword of the conquered general. Whereupon, Cornwallis begged him to accept, as a proof of his esteem, a Scottish claymore which had long been preserved in his family. This relic was presented by Davidson to his brigade, and is still carried by the captain of the New York Highlanders. As for the deer and dog which had excited my curiosity, this is their story. The former had been brought from Virginia to New York by my friend William Porter. In 1836, a

young fawn, whose mother had been killed in the chase, took refuge at the feet of my friend, as if to supplicate for aid and protection. Porter took the fawn in his arms, carried it to the house where he was staying, and afterwards to New York. The very evening of his arrival he sent the little creature to the Highlanders' mess, with his compliments; and the corps, determining to adopt the foundling, committed it to the charge of the band. At first the poor little creature was terribly frightened at the music, but it gradually became accustomed to the harmonious noise, and at six months' end was as tame as a King Charles' spaniel. Every morning it would mount the barrack stairs, and knock at the door of the ward where the band slept, expecting a piece of biscuit. By a strange caprice, however, the creature would never touch anything that had been previously bitten by man. Many attempts were made to deceive its instinct in this respect, but it never could be induced to touch food which had been polluted by human lips. When I first beheld the Highlanders' stag, he had been in the regiment three years, to the great delight of the New York cockneys. He was then full grown, and was a splendid brute. His horns had fourteen branches, and his only fault was that it was difficult to restrain him in his military pride from *coming down* upon the audacious civilian who dared to pass between himself and the band.

One day, in 1844, during a march to Fort Hamilton, the stag (taking advantage of a halt beneath the fort) climbed up the inclined planes to the very top of the fort. When he arrived there, he began to browse very tranquilly upon the grass at the summit. A cat was sleeping at the top, snugly ensconced between the stones, and at the unexpected sight of the stag sprang up in alarm. The deer was not less frightened, and, making a bound, lost its balance and fell into the court below. When the Highlanders rushed out, the poor brute was dead, and the Newfoundland was licking the face of its dead friend in a manner lamentable to behold.

Nick, too (as this dog was called), had a story of his own. He belonged originally to an officer in the marine barracks on board *The Constitution* (the tender then moored off Castle Garden), and he happened to be dining with the Highlanders, in the company of his master, when the stag arrived. The dog immediately struck up a close friendship with the deer, and the other was not slow to reciprocate the signs of friendship. From that moment, Nick refused to quit the barracks, and in spite of every endeavour, coaxing, bribery, even blows, the dog adhered to his resolution, and his master had nothing for it but to cede with a good grace, and present his Newfoundland to the Highlanders. From that time forth, Nick had no friendship for

any one who had not the regulation costume, and it was wo! to the unfortunate Highlander who chose to don the trousers of civilisation. Nick had no sympathy for any one who did not wear the regulation kilt, tartan, Glengarry, and claymore. The Highlanders had become so fond of their deer and dog, that they ordered a splendid silver collar to be engraved for each by the cleverest engraver in Broadway.

One of the cooks of the Highland brigade (named M'Dowell) had conceived a great friendship for *Nick*, but the other (named Duncan) had played the dog a good many tricks, which *Nick* had pretended not to understand, and had not otherwise recognised than by a certain winking of the eye. One summer's day, the Highlanders started on one of those military target excursions so well known at New York. These excursions are generally understood to combine the pleasures of an excursion with the labours of military drill. The weather being very warm, the corps determined upon enjoying a bathe. *Nick* seemed to know very well that, powerful as his enemy Duncan might be on land, he (Nick) was by far the stronger in the water. He watched his opportunity, and would have had Duncan under, if his comrades around had not seen what was going on, and swum to the rescue of the luckless cook. The story goes that the cook repented of his harshness to *Nick;* but the dog was not to be appeased. Nothing could

tempt him to touch a dish offered him by the repentant cook.

The municipal police of New York declares a terrible war against the canine race during the heats of summer. A mournful-looking tumbrel promenades the streets with two ill-looking niggers attending it. One day, they tried to get hold of *Nick*, but the brave dog caught hold of one scoundrel by the breeches, and made such work of them and their sable lining, that he was very glad indeed to be rid of Master *Nick*.

Nick was a dog that mingled prudence with his courage. One evening he took flight before a butcher's dog, and those who beheld the retreat accused him of cowardice. As soon, however, as he had arrived at the Highlanders' barracks, he turned round and soon gave a good account of his antagonist.

Nick died in 1848, and his death was as tragical as that of his Virginian friend. *Nick* had the imprudence to bite a general who reviewed the Highlanders, and was sentenced to be shot. He was executed on the banks of the Haarlem River, and a stone bearing in huge Gothic letters the name of "Devil" recalls the familiar, though Satanic, appellation which the Highlanders were wont to apply to their familiar old *Nick*.

THE MOOSE.

Canada is the country for sport. The uncultivated steppes to the north of Quebec and Montreal are peopled by half-civilised Red Skins, who live only on the produce of their hunting and fishing. For a thorough sportsman there is no country more attractive. It was about Christmas, 1844, when I first visited Canada. A friend of mine, a captain in the service of Queen Victoria, had invited me to visit him.

A few days after my arrival at Quebec, Captain M'Lean proposed that we should go and hunt moose (*Alces Malchis*). I was nothing loth, and we soon completed our preparations for the expedition. The captain had made an appointment with some Indians from St. Anne, an arrangement which secured the services of the four best hunters in their tribe, who were to join us about sixty miles from Quebec at a rendezvous appointed by themselves, on the very limits of Borderland. We started one morning at daybreak in a low car, drawn by a pair of mustangs, harnessed in tandem. A sleigh drawn by a single horse followed us, bearing our arms, provisions, and whatever else was necessary to encamp in the Canadian

desert. Wrapped up in our cloaks of buffalo fur, we braved the fury of the wind which swept the road, driving before it the showers of hail and snow with which the ground was covered. The day had scarcely begun to dawn when we passed through the suburb of St. Vallier, still in its first sleep. Not a soul was to be seen, and the snow whitened the roads and effaced every trace of humanity. The road to Loretto was wide and well kept, and with the exception of the drifting snow nothing threatened the comfort and safety of our journey. In a short time we were at Loretto, and there Jack, the trapper, met us by appointment. Directly he joined us, Jack petitioned for a little money, "to kill the devil" as he said, the foul spirit having paralysed him with fright. In reply to this appeal, M'Lean was foolish enough to give him a few shillings, with which he managed, by the aid of a few glasses of very strong gin, to get as drunk as a lord, and he very nearly contrived to upset the trap as soon as he got into it. You may be sure that for the remainder of the journey we sternly refused any further advance of money. In spite of our precautions, however, Jack got so drunk before mid-day that we had to threaten leaving him on the road. This threat, repeated with a serious air, produced its effect, and Jack thought it best to curl himself up in the bottom of the sleigh and go to sleep. The Canadian Indians, directly they have touched

"fire-water," give themselves up unreservedly to its slavery, and will sacrifice anything for the gratification of their favourite vice.

On either side of the road we traversed, the ground had been cleared away for a certain distance, but beyond that was the uncultivated forest and complete solitude. We crossed a number of half-frozen brooks, and the snow fell thickly in flakes. Occasionally we met sleighs laden with grain or wood, and as the road was very narrow it was not so easy to effect a clear passage. Once we came into collision with a farmer of the neighbourhood, and as our vehicle happened to be the heavier of the two, over he went into a ditch containing five feet of snow. Wrapped in our fur cloaks, and secure in the weight of our car, our Homeric laugh contrasted blithely with the oaths of our Canadian Phäeton.

About nightfall, we reached the borders of a small lake, about a dozen miles from the place where we expected to meet the moose. The log-hut, which plumed itself upon the magnificent title of "King George's Hotel," was a miserable bothy. It was a barn divided into two compartments, one of which was called the Bar Room (where the indispensable American "drinks" were sold), and the other was the landlord's bedroom. He, as I soon found out, (and it was some consolation in that desolate place,) was a well-educated Englishman, who had known

better days. The sole variety to this man's monotonous life was the occasional receipt of a copy of the *Quebec Journal*, containing a few items of news of his native land. He took, however, great pride in showing us, through the frozen panes of his solitary window, a few acres of ground, with about a dozen misshapen huts, which he was pleased to call "Royal Village." "Twelve years ago," said he, "my colony had no existence."

It was quite dark when we quitted the "King George's Hotel," and it was not easy to find our way; but, fortunately, both the captain and myself had made up our minds to make the best of everything. The road along which we travelled pursued a zig-zag direction down the steep sides of the mountain until it reached the river St. Anne. On our right were the forest trees, clinging to the rock, and covered with long icicles, which clinked against each other as we passed; to the left a precipice, which offered anything but a pleasant prospect. On a sudden, one of our horses fell, and the other, taking fright, jumped over the precipice, and lodged in an enormous cedar tree, which was very fortunately placed in a position to receive him. We were in a very awkward position, for, if the tree had given way, over we must have gone; and I must admit that neither the captain nor myself had any desire to laugh until we saw our way clearly out of the difficulty. We managed, after some trouble, to get out

of the car, and then, with the aid of friend Jack, who was somewhat sobered by that time, we managed to rescue the horse from his perilous position, and place him side by side with his companion. It is worth noticing that, as soon as the poor animal found itself in a position of safety, it ceased kicking, which was very fortunate for us, for the road was very narrow. After that, we crept on as quietly as could be; but in half an hour Jack (who was now quite sobered) began to halloo like a Stentor, and presently we found ourselves at the halting-place where we were to spend the night. Anxious to enjoy the warmth of the fire which lit up the whole building, I jumped over the side of the car, only to plunge up to the middle in the snow, a position from which I could only be extricated by the assistance of the Indians, who sallied out and helped us out of our difficulties. The name of the host was Joachim, and certainly his house was anything but a palace. There was a room on the ground-floor, about thirty feet square, furnished with two beds in the furthermost corners, six chairs very much out of repair, and an arm-chair in very bad order. There was a stove in the middle with a blazing fire, around which we found the master of the house, his wife, three very tall and ugly daughters, four lads as ugly as their sisters, the five Indians who had pulled me out of my snow bed, and half-a-dozen dogs.

Whilst the men were filling the place with the smoke of their tobacco, the women prepared a disgusting mess in a dirty pot, which reminded us of the black broth of the Spartans,—at any rate, the colour was similar, and the smell of the onions would have turned the stomach of the most bigoted Provençal. Those who smoked spat, and the floor was consequently not in the cleanest condition. With the help of a little tea, however, and a few cakes which we had with us, we managed to make a tolerable supper, and afterwards we sought out a place less dirty than the rest where we could spread our buffalo robes, and snatch an hour or so of brief repose. The dogs soon followed our example, and insisted upon nestling up to our furs, in spite of the kicks which we freely administered to them. As soon as the men had retired to rest, the women extinguished the two lamps, and (their modesty being protected by the darkness which prevailed) they went to bed, and began snoring horribly. To complete my misfortunes, I had spread my blankets at the foot of a newly-repaired clock, and what with the monotonous sound of the pendulum, the horrible smell which pervaded the whole place, the sonorous sighs of the four women, and the overpowering heat of the close room, I was kept awake for a long time. At length I yielded to the sense of sleepiness, and dreamt a horrid dream, that I was in a room filled with clocks, which were snoring

and spitting as hard as they could, whilst a Red Skin beat the time upon a colossal bell. Captain M'Lean was much less squeamish than myself, for he slept like a soldier on the march.

As soon as the first beams of morning were visible, everybody rose, the women performing the duties of the toilet behind a curtain. The breakfast was a repetition of the supper of the previous evening, and then the Indians began to pack up our traps in their *tobogins*. The Canadian *tobogin* is a small sleigh, made of planks scarcely thicker than the bark of a tree, and shaped like the prow of a vessel. They were not very heavily laden, and by the aid of a leather strap they could be drawn very quickly over the snow. As soon as our preparations were completed we started, accompanied by the five Indians and their dogs. The Red Skins were Hurons, the relics of that unfortunate tribe which now consists of not more than a hundred families inhabiting the little village of Loretto. During the winter, the Hurons live by hunting, and by serving the travellers and farmers who frequent the neighbourhood,—always making those who have recourse to them pay very dearly. In the summer, they till their fields, make their fishing-tackle and their clothes, and also those wonderful moccasins and head-dresses which no one wears, but which are freely sold in other parts of the world as national Indian costumes. If the truth must be spoken, these

Hurons are degenerate savages, brutalised, servile, and with the most filthy tendencies one can possibly imagine. Moreover, there is really very little pure Indian blood in their veins, for their contact with the Canadians and the French has resulted in adulterating the purity of their race very considerably. This it is easy to see from the mongrel look of all who have taken the place of the pure Hurons. Their physiognomy, moreover, has assumed an expression which is far from characteristic of the race from whom they are supposed to be descended. Their dress consists of a blanket, fastened round the waist by a coloured girdle, woollen gaiters fastened round their legs, moccasins made of moose skin, and a woollen cap, dyed red or blue. Winter or summer, this was the dress of the Hurons, whose greatest merit was the ease with which, on their snow shoes, they could traverse immense distances.

Our blankets and buffalo skins were pretty heavy, so we confided them to three Indians, with a special charge to find their way to an encampment which was indicated. We then put on our snow shoes, and led the van. Though the weather was sharpish, the exercise soon made us feel as if we were in the dog-days. However, it was a splendid morning, and the sun shone brilliantly, even incommoding us by the brightness of its rays. The storm of the previous night had laid the snow in light

waves, which crackled as we passed over them. There was not a cloud upon the horizon, the wind had entirely fallen, and the snow-laden branches of the trees hung as in a scene in an opera. In spite of the cold, we felt perfectly comfortable, for the air was as pure and light as on a mountain top.

The snow had quite obliterated all traces of the path, but the Indians had no difficulty in finding their way by the trees and the landmarks of the neighbourhood. The desert was before us as far as the North Pole, and it was not without a certain emotion that we penetrated that thicket of ancient trees, under whose branches we made our way as well as we were able. At last we halted at the foot of a hill to take breath. Our Indians trampled on the snow to harden it, and then collected a sufficient amount of dry twigs to form a couch; after which they discovered a spring of water, deliciously cold and pure. In the quiet solitude of Nature we could hear the murmur of the stream slowly trickling under the snow, and only betraying itself by a little break here and there in the roof of snow which overhung it.

About mid-day we had amply dined, and had started once more upon our journey. After three hours and a half of very difficult travelling, we reached the banks of a stream where we resolved to pass the night. Neither M'Lean nor myself were sorry for this arrangement, for we were both

sufficiently unaccustomed to the snow shoes to be quite knocked up. The Indians set to work at once to construct a cabin wherein to spend the night. They took off their shoes, and using them as shovels, soon excavated a chamber twenty feet broad, the walls of which were made of snow, hardened by the pressure of the hands and feet. They then cut some young saplings, and by inclining them against each other, and then covering them with branches and pieces of bark (leaving an opening for the doorway, and another at the top for the smoke), managed to make a very decent tent. Two enormous blocks of wood served for fireplace, and between these were placed the driest twigs that could be found. All round the tent, the Indians had constructed snow pillows, so that we could lie with our feet to the fire, and by spreading our blankets upon the dried branches we managed to get a comfortable bed.

As soon as these preparations were finished, M'Lean, the Indians, and myself made the best of our way to the river, to get our supper. With the help of an axe, the Hurons dug a couple of holes in the ice, and whether it was that the admission of fresh air gave the trout an inordinate appetite I don't know, but as soon as we dipped in a hook, up came a fish, and after floundering for a minute or two on the bed of moss which the Indians had prepared for its reception, there it lay, coated in a

mail of ice. Whilst the captain and myself fished in the river, the Red Skins were cutting the wood required to keep up the fire during the night. A large boiler containing salt pork, peas, and biscuit was soon boiling over the fire, and by the side was a huge pot of tea which emitted the most agreeable odours. The inside of the hut was thoroughly well warmed, and our fur cloaks protected us perfectly from the cold which prevailed outside. The Indians had manufactured some torches of birch-bark, which looked picturesque enough when stuck in the snow walls of our comfortable little cabin. We had a large leather bag for our strong box, and in this we locked up our money, watches, and stock of brandy, so as to avoid exciting unnecessarily the cupidity of our guides. We supped mainly upon fish. The trout were delicious, and we enjoyed them all the more from our inability to appreciate the primitive soup of the Red Skins. Feeling our appetites somewhat excited, we determined to make an attempt upon the tins of preserved meats which we had brought with us. Alas! the failure was horrible. We opened twenty-four boxes, filled with truffled pheasant, partridge pie, peas, beans, cauliflowers, Julienne soup, gravy, milk and cream—and the result was that we had to throw them all out into the snow. We were well punished for our epicurism.

In order to render the dogs more eager after the

game on the morrow, the Indians had excluded them from the cabin and had given them no dinner. One by one, however (profiting by the inattention of the Red Skins), they crept in. About midnight, I was awakened with a sensation like that of a hand of iron laid upon my shoulder. In a short time I realised that it was the cold. In fact, the brandy was freezing in our bottles, and I never remember to have experienced such cold as we felt that night. At length day dawned and we soon resumed our journey. We had now to traverse a rough and rocky country, and so steep in many places that we were obliged to cling to the rocks and branches of the trees. Sometimes by putting our snow shoes together we would glide down a slope with great rapidity, but it occasionally happened that an obstacle in the way would bring us to grief with anything but a pleasant expression of countenance. It was really most fatiguing work, and the great wonder was how the Indians found their way; but, acquainted as they were with all the sinuosities of the desert, they seemed to have an instinctive knowledge of the path even below the crust of snow. At length our leading guide exhibited great delight at seeing the banks of a stream which (he said) could not be far from the tracks of the moose which we were searching after.

In the language of Canadian huntsmen the lair frequented by moose is called a *ravage*, and the

animals stay there for weeks together, browsing upon the twigs of the trees, and remaining until they have eaten up all the herbage in the neighbourhood. We soon built up another snow cabin, cooked our supper, and arranged ourselves around the fire. Fortunately it was not so cold as on the previous night, and we enjoyed a good night's rest.

Next morning, when we awoke, it was rather dark. The snow had fallen thickly, but we started at once after moose, taking with us four of the Indians and all the dogs. It was not easy travelling, but in spite of every difficulty we arrived at a spot where we found the tracks of the moose, and then we thought no more of either cold or fatigue. Our whole desire was to come across the moose, and it was evident, from the tracks, that the herd was a very numerous one. It was easy to perceive the marks of their teeth on the branches all around, and the freshness of the marks proved that they were not far ahead of us. M'Lean, the Indians, and the dogs now took up the chase with avidity; but I must confess that I was much less skilful in my snow shoes than my companions, and whilst they flew on, I made many a stumble. Suddenly the dogs stopped, and at the moment when we issued from a dense thicket, we saw three enormous moose, and the spectacle seemed to give our dogs fresh power to their lungs. Like prudent animals, however, they kept their distance, and watched their

opportunity for attack. Directly the moose saw us off they were, slowly, however, and their feet sinking deep into the snow. The dogs were emboldened and sprang after them, but still preserved a respectable distance.

I cannot tell whether it was by chance or arrangement, but the three moose started off in three separate directions. McLean went after the first, I after the second, and one of the Indians gave chase to the third. At first, the animals outstripped us in speed, and mine managed certainly to keep at a distance of from six to eight gun-shots. Presently, however, large clots of blood proved that the hard snow had wounded him severely in the legs, and I began to have hope. The cover was so thick that it was impossible to see the quarry, even at a short distance, but I could hear the heavy breathing, and the fracture of the branches which he broke as he rushed on. The farther we rushed on, the louder grew the noise of the breaking branches, and the redder the snow with the blood of the moose. The dogs were barking away like mad creatures, and on I rushed until I came to an opening in the forest, where the moose had turned to bay upon the dogs. The hounds had made a circle round him of some six or seven yards' distance, where they remained snapping their teeth, without daring to approach any closer.

The moose I had in view was a noble creature.

He was at least seven feet high from hoof to horn, and directly he saw me advance he seemed to address himself to me in a supplicating manner. Alas! I had taken too much trouble to get this chance to feel any pity, and my ball struck him full in the chest. The severity of the blow aroused the instinct of revenge in the animal, and he turned upon me fiercely. As I could not escape in my snow shoes, I awaited his attack, and fired again when he was close upon me. The poor brute rolled over, the blood spouting from his nose and mouth. The Indians who followed me, after making sure that my quarry had lost all power of being dangerous, then rushed up.

This was the largest quadruped of the deer tribe I had ever seen. He was as big as a horse, and his horns were a yard and a half in height. It was the first moose I had ever seen outside a museum, and he seemed to me a noble brute. The Red Skins lost no time in cutting up my quarry, and the skin, head, and the choicest pieces were soon placed on a pair of *tobogins*, the rest being left for the wolves, the kites, and the eagles; and when this ceremony was concluded, we made the best of our way back again to the rendezvous. McLean arrived there shortly after we did, and he also had killed a moose. We were both furiously hungry, and thoroughly enjoyed the marrow-bones and kidneys, which the Indians served up as soon as possible. The rest of the choice

pieces were packed up and buried in the snow, the pickings being given to the dogs, who enjoyed them thoroughly. The Indians supped heartily on the venison, eat until they could stuff no longer, and then went to sleep, and snored like steam-engines. After so full a meal, old Jack tried hard to get hold of the brandy bottle, but we were too watchful for him. Next morning, the Indians were very anxious that we should continue hunting moose; but McLean and myself having by this time discovered that the pleasure was not worth the trouble, made up our minds to go back as soon as possible; so that, about mid-day, everything being packed up, we started on our way back again to Quebec.

Two hours afterwards, the dogs began to bark furiously at the foot of a hill, and we heard presently a tremendous crashing of branches and twigs. There were five large caribous (the American reindeer) galloping at about a hundred yards from our party. McLean and I both fired, but to no purpose; our bullets were wasted upon the branches of the forest, and the herd soon disappeared in the distance. It was of no use attempting to follow them, for the snow was now hardened by the afternoon cold, and the hoofs of the caribous scarcely made any impression. That night we reached the first cabin which we had erected, and, as may be supposed, we found it quite unoccupied. The snow, however, had drifted up against its sides,

and as we were digging it clear some of those chattering pies, whom the Indians call *moose birds*, perched on the branches which overhung our cabin, and essayed frequent attacks on the *tobogins* which contained the moose meat. The dogs, however, kept good watch, and soon put the winged rascals to the rightabout. The captain and I fired several shots at them, but, as we had nothing but bullets,—not an ounce of shot,—we only succeeded in frightening them from branch to branch, and in causing them to redouble their hideous noise. Next morning, we started early, and regained the tavern about mid-day.

The proprietor of the "King George Hotel" received us with enthusiasm, and gave us a lesson as to the proper way of cooking the muzzle, or upper lip, of the moose. The flavour of the dish closely resembles that of the turtle, and it is of enormous dimensions. Among the Canadian *gourmets*, it is as much esteemed as the "green fat" itself.

We encountered several accidents on our way back. Once we had nearly lost our road, our driver taking us over a hedge, which only just peeped above the snow. Instead of helping us out of the difficulty, he began to bellow like a calf, and when he was tired of that he swore like a trooper. In the struggles of the horses to disengage themselves, over we went, and McLean and I found ourselves suddenly about a dozen yards from the

sleigh grovelling in the snow. We soon managed to pick ourselves up, however, and there was no great harm done. By ten o'clock that evening we were in Quebec; and I need hardly describe to the reader the pleasure we felt at finding hot water once more at our door, with good razors, soap, hair-brushes, and a comfortable bed in a well warmed room. To appreciate thoroughly the delights of these appliances of civilisation, you should be deprived of them for six days.

In spite of all my fondness for sport, good reader, I assure you that I have no ambition whatever to start upon another sleigh journey; and if ever again the desire should seize me to renew my acquaintance with moose deer, I shall take the omnibus to the Zoological Gardens, and cultivate it at my leisure. *There*, at any rate, I shall be sure to find a *ravage*, and I can study the habits of the creature without the slightest inconvenience.

For all that, I am not sorry to have had an opportunity of visiting the solitudes of Canada. I only protest against the idea that there is any pleasure in hunting moose in the depth of winter, or that the Red Skins of Loretto have any affinity with the Uncases and Chingachkooks of Mr. Fenimore Cooper.

THE CARIBOU.

During the month of January, 1843, when there was the coldest weather I ever experienced in the United States, I was seated one evening at the immense fireside in the dining-room of my host, Mr. Thomas Howard, a farmer of the state of New Brunswick, who was one of the boldest hunters in those parts. Thanks to the introduction of my friend Mr. William Porter, the clever editor of the *New York Spirit of the Times*, I had been received by this American Nimrod with the most kindly hospitality. The snow was falling without in large flakes, and was beating against the windows of the room in which Mr. Howard and myself were seated near a table whereon the servant had placed a bottle of capital sherry.

"Fill your glass and mine too, good friend," quoth my host. "I'll drink a glass to France, to your beloved country, and to all true sportsmen who, like you, are animated with the sacred fire. I have not forgotten that I have promised that you shall kill a caribou* before your return to New

* The caribou (*Tarandus rangifer*) is the largest of the North American deer. It is called the American reindeer, and closely resembles the Lapland reindeer in shape, but its habits are quite different. The caribou is, incontestibly, as dangerous as the bison; and although it is alleged

York. You know it is an animal that runs with inconceivable rapidity, and that to approach within distance you have to track it with snow shoes, those huge things hanging up against the wall." Mr. Howard pointed to two immense pattens of oval shape, made something in the shape of battledores. These shoes enable the Indians and trappers to keep their footing on the snow. "You'll not find it easy to manage these when you first put them on, but in a short time you'll surmount every difficulty, no fear. You know that my Indian friend Monäi has promised to let us know as soon as the weather is favourable for hunting the caribou, and as nothing can be more propitious for this sport than the snow which is now upon the ground, I feel certain we shall soon see something of him, this very evening, maybe. The camp of the tribe is now pitched about five miles off, and an Indian never forfeits his word."

The words had scarcely left his lips, when the barking of the dogs announced the approach of strange footsteps. A moment afterwards a sharp whistle was heard, and the dogs changed their notes of warning to those of joy, proving the arrival of an intimate friend. "Here's Monäi!" cried Mr. Howard; "talk of the ——, eh, my boy? My dogs

never to attack man, it is not prudent to depend too much upon its timidity. The caribou is very excellent eating, as delicate as the kid, and as juicy as the hare.

know the Red Skin well, and they're bidding him welcome." Sure enough, the door opened without a premonitory tap, according to Indian custom, and in walked the Indian Monäi. He was a man of about middle size, powerfully built, and with a handsome expressive face, though a tinge of melancholy was in the look. His eyes shone like carbuncles, and after he had cast a wary glance around, Monäi came forward towards the fire-place.

His dress consisted of a hunting-shirt of buffalo skin, ornamented with embroideries made of porcupine's quills, and a fringe cut out of the skin itself. His legs were protected by leather drawers buttoned over the calf, and from the knee to the ankle with leather buttons, and ornamented and fringed like the shirt. A pair of moccasins made of peccary skin were upon Monäi's feet, which were as small as those of a Spanish senorita. He wore a large belt around the waist with a pouch hanging from it. This was made of otter's skin, and was decorated to match the rest of the costume of this child of the forest. Monäi took up a little wooden stool which was usually occupied by Mr. Howard's only child, a very little girl, approached the fire, sat down, and without speaking drew forth a tobacco bag, which he offered in the most graceful manner possible. Whilst I was admiring this gift of the Red Skin, he filled his own pipe with tobacco, lit it with a red-hot cinder, and after a few puffs of smoke passed it on

to me with a look as if he expected me to use it in turn. I have no great fancy for tobacco, I must admit, and the tobacco which is usually smoked in these calumets is especially disagreeable to me. I was going to refuse, therefore, but Mr. Howard said:—"Have no fear, my friend. That tobacco will do you no harm. Try it, and you will see that Monäi has no intention of poisoning you."

In fact, I found Monäi's tobacco so delicious that when I had finished smoking the first pipe I was indiscreet enough to fill up again and try a second. Mr. Howard now filled up a glass of wine and presented it to Monäi saying:—"My brother will stay here to-night." The Indian swallowed the wine to the last drop before replying:—"The Indian goes on the hunting-path to morrow. The weather is good for the caribou, and the snow is nine inches and a half deep. My white brother will come with me? See, I have brought two new pairs of snow shoes—one for him and the other for me."

"Which way shall we go, Monäi?"

"To the north; to the country where we went before. The caribous are many, for the Indians have not been there since."

"Well, Monäi, if you'll let me bring my friend with me," said Mr. Howard, "I'll go with you."

At these words Monäi cast upon me a rapid look, and after a moment's silence, asked:—"Does my

pale-faced brother know how to wear the snow-shoes?"

I dared not tell Monäi that I was able to use these novel shoes, and was going to confess my inexperience, when Mr. Howard broke in with—"Oh, I'll answer for the pale-face. And if he can't follow us in the hunt, he can stay in the wigwam and cook the dinner."

Although the Indian did not seem to appreciate this arrangement very highly, he gave a sign of consent, and we began to make the necessary arrangements for starting next morning at day-break.

We had five and twenty leagues to travel before reaching the rendezvous. Mr. Howard busied himself with the preparation of the rifles, powder, ball, clothes, and provisions. I aided him in this, and we had to quit the dining-room for that purpose. On our return within half an hour, our ears were disagreeably visited by a loud snoring on the hearth. It was Monäi, who had stretched himself on the carpet in front of the fire, and was preparing for the fatigues of the morrow by enjoying a good sound sleep.

"The queer fellow!" said Mr. Howard; "he prefers that bit of carpet to the best bed in the house. We have only to leave him wood enough to keep up the fire, and he'll be as happy as a king. Come, let us follow his example and go to bed. To-morrow morning you'll be woke up by a Red Skin, for

Monäi will be pulling at your feet, as is the custom of his people."

At half-past three next morning the light of a lantern flashed across my half-closed eyelids and awoke me with a start. I thought it was Monäi whom I saw before me, but the voice of Mr. Howard soon relieved me from the doubt which his extraordinary costume had put me into.

"Come, up with you, that's a good fellow," cried he; "everything is ready, the coffee is getting cold, and if you don't make haste, Monäi won't leave us a mutton chop or a slice of ham to eat. Here's a dress exactly like mine; jump into it and come down."

When breakfast was finished and the digestion warmed up with a sup of whiskey, we all three got into the light sleigh, and our horse brought us in seven hours to a village within a league of the rendezvous.

In a tavern, bearing the sign of the immortal Washington, a wretched bothy, with no comfort about it except in the bar-room, or rather smoking-room of the house, we found beds as hard as billiard tables, but we managed to sleep upon them without much difficulty, and next morning at daybreak were ready to start. As I was dressing myself and was about to put the finishing touch to my costume by donning the moccasins, Mr. Howard stayed my hand by saying:—"Look here, my friend, let me give you

your first lesson in backwoods fashions. First of all, put on these woollen socks; now wind these two pieces of felt round your feet; and then you can put on your moccasins. Now let me put on your snow-shoes for you. Keep the legs wide apart, for if you walk with your ordinary gait in shoes three feet long, you are sure to fall."

Without more ado, he seized his rifle and followed Moniäi, who was fifty yards ahead of us. I had scarcely taken three steps before my snow-shoes got entangled, and down I came upon my nose; but I got up without much difficulty, and after two or three more tumbles (which the snow prevented from being dangerous), I could get on very well in my snow shoes.

After two hours' walk through a thick forest of cedars and pine trees we arrived at the banks of a warm water spring, where we rested some time, and then resumed our march. I observed that Moniäi, who led the way as our guide, advanced with great caution, examining the marks on the snow, and the twigs and branches which had been broken from the trees. At last he stopped short before a fallen tree, and stooping over its sides plunged his arms into the snow. "Deer here," said Mr. Howard, "there are the fumets quite fresh. They can't go fast over this snow, and we shall be sure to come upon them presently, so be sure and keep quiet, and if a deer comes within shot don't think of firing at him.

We are quite three miles yet from the caribous, but their hearing is so fine that they would be sure to hear your shot and off they would go. Down, Jack, down!" cried Mr. Howard to a magnificent hound. "See, he has found the scent."

The further we advanced the more distinct became the traces. Jack was held in leash. Monäi marched first, and we followed in silence, Jack thrusting his nose into the fumets of the deer. The good dog foamed at the mouth, and his eyes were nearly starting out of his head, but he did not utter the slightest sound. Suddenly Monäi threw himself on the ground, and Mr. Howard followed his example. I remained standing, but a rap across the shins from the barrel of my friend's rifle soon made me place myself at his side. I was going to ask the meaning of this, when, on raising my head, I could see within two hundred yards of us a stag and six deer, crouched upon the snow, and in all probability asleep. In spite of Mr. Howard's warning, I raised my rifle, and was just about to fire, when another rap recalled me to my senses. Mr. Howard got up presently, and by gliding from tree to tree, and from bush to bush, tried to get closer to the herd, whilst Monäi and I remained motionless spectators of a sight which every sportsman will appreciate.

Suddenly the herd rose up, with their necks stretched out as if listening, and their eyes searching the forest all around for the enemy of whom their

instinct gave them warning. The scent of the deer seemed at fault, and brought them nothing but the odours of the cedars in the forest, when the stag advanced towards Mr. Howard, followed by his does, and came to within ten yards of the tree behind which my friend had concealed himself. At this moment, a red handkerchief waved by Mr. Howard attracted his sight, and instead of frightening or stopping him, the stag raised his head, which was surmounted by as fine branches as ever I saw in my life, and came near enough to almost touch the handkerchief with the end of his nose. This was the time for Jack, who sprang upon him, caught him by the throat, and inflicted a severe wound. Off went the stag and his does with the rapidity of lightning, pursued by Jack, Mr. Howard, and Monäi, who slid along the snow in their shoes as rapidly as the Dutch skaters do along the canals of the Zuyder Zee. I was now left behind, and soon lost sight of them, although I did my best to keep up. At last I reached a place where I found traces of the combat which had taken place. The snow was covered with large spots of blood. Far ahead I could hear the voices of Mr. Howard and Jack, and following the track which my companions had left behind them on the snow, in a few minutes I reached a gentle incline descending into a valley, in the midst of which was a lake as round as a basin. Never had I seen a more extra-

ordinary or beautiful spectacle. The wind had swept the snow from the ice, and the rays of the sun shining brightly, were reflected as from the surface of a mirror. Mr. Howard and Monäi, whom I found at the edge of the forest, pointed out to me the wounded deer, pursued at a distance by Jack, and flying around the lake with the rapidity of an arrow.

"Isn't it a splendid sight?" asked Mr. Howard, as the stag passed within forty paces of us; "and don't you feel tempted to put a ball into him? Come on," he cried, "we must get to the foot of the lake and meet our friend. See, see, he's giving way, and Jack is on him. Up he gets again. Good dog! On to him! Ha! he's got up again with Jack on him. Why, it's like a mouse hanging on to a cat. Bravo, Jack! Bravo!"

At these words, Mr. Howard rushed on to the tired stag, who was now fighting with the strength of despair, and drawing from its sheath a large hunting-knife, plunged it to the hilt into the bosom of the poor beast.

When I reached the spot where this new style of hunt had terminated, I was quite out of breath. Mr. Howard was caressing Jack, who seemed, however, to pay less attention to his master's approbation than to the blood of the stag, which flowed in streams from the wound in his neck. "Good dog!" cried Mr. Howard, "the best hound in

England could not have done his work better, and they would have sunk in the snow, whereas Jack slides over it, and none of them can seize a stag by the neck without having to let go again. Monäi," he cried to the Indian, who stood looking on as impassible as a statue, "cut up the deer before it freezes, pack up the best pieces, and leave the rest for the coyotes. We've got enough venison to last us this time. Now, my friend, come and let us try and get some trout, so that we may have fish as well as flesh for dinner. I don't think we could fare better in Paris, even at Véfour's or the Trois Frères Provençaux."

So said, so done. He soon hewed an opening through the ice to the waters of the lake. Monäi baited a couple of lines with some scraps cut off the lungs of the stag, and whilst I held one in each hand, Mr. Howard lit the fire to cook our dinner withal.

One by one I drew up four splendid trout, and was getting immensely fond of this sport, which was quite new to me, when Mr. Howard hailed me to bring him the results of my fishing. The trout were handed over to Monäi, who scaled and cleaned them, then split them from end to end, and spitted them on a branch, with four skewers to keep them open, like so many fans. Venison steaks were roasting on the hot ashes, and beside these he laid the trout, prepared in this fashion. The feast was

soon ready, and I was going to bid the Indian seat himself beside us, when Mr. Howard said: "You need not be at the trouble of inviting Monäi. He only eats once a day, and seldom drinks except at that repast. We, however, who are not accustomed to such sobriety, may fall on." So, sitting down on a fallen tree, we attacked with keen appetite the food which was spread before us. The venison steaks and trout (even allowing for that seasoning which makes any dish delicious, a sportsman's appetite) proved worthy of the table of the most refined epicure. There were very few scraps left from our meal to satisfy poor Jack's appetite; but, fortunately for him, he did not disdain raw meat, and Monäi cut off enough for him to satisfy his utmost desires. A calumet of tobacco concluded the feast, and we stretched ourselves at full length on the ground, whilst Monäi finished his task of cutting up the stag.

Mr. Howard and I had enjoyed the sweets of repose for about three-quarters of an hour, when Monäi came towards us dragging a sleigh after him by a thong. On this, he had packed all the venison. Not only had the Indian cut up the animal, and wrapped up in the "robe" all the best pieces of the meat, but within the hour he had also constructed the sleigh, and the rude vehicle was solid enough to bear a hundred and fifty pounds weight of meat securely.

We continued our march, and when we arrived at

the place where the caribous were expected to be, the sun was disappearing under the horizon.

The country in which we found ourselves was covered with trees. Before us was a lofty mountain, and through the valley beneath a torrent rushed and bubbled over a rocky bed, as if it were a stream of boiling water. All over the snow, the traces of the caribous were to be seen; and Mr. Howard, pointing out a large track on the frozen carpet over which we were walking, said: "As this is the first time you have ever seen the footprint of a caribou, observe how closely it resembles that of an ox, so large and ponderous is it; and when you come within sight of the gigantic creature, I promise you something which will make you forget all your fatigue."

After a series of marches, or rather slides along the snow, we reached a cabin which had served for many years as a resting-place during their excursions for Mr. Howard and Monäi. It was a square hut, built of the trunks of trees, piled up one upon another, and supported in a horizontal position by piles driven into the earth outside and inside. The sloping roof was made of the trunks of trees, and was covered, as well as the walls of the hut, with mud and pieces of bark instead of tiles. This log-cabin, although uninhabited, was in very good repair, and the covering of snow which surrounded it rendered it a very comfortable shelter. Monäi soon cleared the

snow from the door of this forest residence, swept up the interior, and lighted on the hearth, which was made of a rough piece of stone which the chisel of the mason had never touched, a fire, which soon burnt up famously, and restored animation to our limbs, now quite stiffened with the cold. Whilst the Indian was thus occupied, Mr. Howard and I cut wood for the fire, and branches of fir to lay on the ground for our rough couches. Upon these improvised litters we spread our woollen blankets, and I can assure the reader that the beds were anything but uncomfortable.

The dawn gave way to darkness. Monäi lighted a pine torch, and placed it in one of the corners of the hut. Our supper was soon devoured; and shortly afterwards, with our feet to the fire, and heads wrapped up in our blankets, we all three slept our very best.

Two hours before dawn, I was awakened by Monäi, who was busy making preparations for the hunt. The door of the log-cabin was open, and from my rough couch I could see a sky without a cloud, and the Star of Morning shining above the horizon. The air was lively, but there was no wind, and the cold was easily endurable. I rose with a bound, and by the help of a spring of water which bubbled at the base of a gigantic pine-tree some yards distant from the hut, I soon got rid of that heaviness which you are apt to feel after sleeping in your

clothes. Indeed, I felt so gay that I burst out unconsciously with—

"Behold, how brightly breaks the morning!"

but had scarcely got to the end of the first verse when Mr. Howard rushed out from the hut, and cried,—

"Confound it, my dear friend, pray hold your row! The game will hear you two leagues off. The caribous can hear the slightest noise, and their instinct is like the fox's."

Monäi also was muttering in his own tongue a malediction against my harmonious outburst, which, fortunately for me, was only intelligible to Mr. Howard.

The breakfast was excellent and plentiful; so we put on our snow-shoes with renewed strength. The rays of the sun began to pierce the damp foggy curtains of the morning, which rose gradually and dispersed. We all three set out, keeping the most profound silence. Yet I think, to tell the truth, I could hear the beating of my own heart, so excited was I at the expectation of meeting with the king of the North American forests. The aspect of the country through which we passed was admirable and magnificent. The stillness of nature was disturbed only by the sprightly gambols of the squirrels, and the flight of the magpies and the crows. Presently we came upon traces of the caribous; but without stopping to examine, Mr. Howard and myself followed Monäi, to whose direction we had confided ourselves unreservedly.

We soon arrived at the foot of a lofty mountain, and then Monäi, turning towards us, told us in a whisper that we were now close to a favourite feeding ground of the caribous, who are fond of browsing in the sunshine. The Indian admonished us to keep the most profound silence, and we followed quietly in his trail. A little way on, we came upon a freshly dropped fumet, and Monäi assured us that the animal had passed that way certainly not more than two hours before. Taking a course against the wind, which had now become perceptible, he led us to a hollow where the caribous had passed the night, for we could see, all around some stunted trees, a space where the snow had been trampled. Mr. Howard thrust his hand in the snow, and pretended that it was still warm. At any rate, it was certain that the caribous were not far off.

Our first care was to put fresh caps upon our rifles, and then Mr. Howard fastened a cord to Jack's collar, so as to keep him in leash. The traces of our game were around us in all directions, so that without an intimate knowledge of the habits of the creature, it was impossible to decide which way to take.

Monäi soon relieved us from our embarrassment; for, after a careful examination, the Indian made a sign for us to follow him, and we advanced with the greatest precaution. Examining the tracks which we now followed, I observed that all the prints in

the snow had a bluish tint, and were as friable as flour. This was a proof that we were on the trail of the caribous.

Suddenly Monäi halted, and kneeling down, dexterously untied the strings which fastened his snow-shoes to his feet, so that he could walk more quietly. Mr. Howard made me a sign to approach, and whispered:—"My good friend, one more last word of advice, don't lose sight of me; follow close behind me, and make no noise. The caribous are close to us."

We all undid our snow-shoes, and slung them over our shoulders. Monäi set his right foot upon the snow and pressed it gently, repeating the operation with the left. Mr. Howard followed in the same footmarks, and I trod scrupulously in the steps of Mr. Howard. Anyone following us would have supposed that a single man had preceded him. Presently Monäi quietly lay down upon his belly, and we followed his example. He remained so long in this position that I raised my head to see what was going on, when the Indian, whom nothing seemed to escape, turned towards me with a menacing look, and Mr. Howard gave me a kick to remind me that I was in fault.

The forest was bordered by an extent of open ground, and Monäi, who had sighted a caribou, was waiting for an opportunity of reaching the shelter of a large tree without being seen by the animal.

To see him crawling along on his belly you would have taken him for a snail, and we all endeavoured to imitate him as closely as possible. At last, in my turn, I saw some caribous. There was a herd of about twenty, some tearing away the bark from the trees for their breakfast, and evidently enjoying themselves, whilst others were engaged in their morning toilette, licking their fur with their tongues, and combing it with their antlers. All, with the exception of the largest animal of the herd, seemed quite unconscious of the approach of an enemy; but the old bull looked very much disturbed; he kept his head up, and cast around him the most anxious and suspicious looks, pricking up his ears, distending his nostrils, and sniffing the air violently. Monäi kept him in sight, and advanced only when he turned his head, we imitating his movements faithfully. Every sportsman who reads this will understand the state of anxiety and excitement in which I was, and how the minutes seemed hours.

At last, we were all three behind the wished-for tree. Mr. Howard (scarcely opening his lips) gave me to understand that I was to aim at the nearest caribou on my side; he was to take the bull, which was about eight yards off; whilst Monäi was to keep his shot in reserve to help us in case of necessity.

We both fired at once, and I was just about to spring up to see what had been the result of my

skill, when Monäi, seizing me with a grip of iron, held me down upon the snow. Lifting my head, I could see the bull at which Mr. Howard had fired pawing the snow, and trying to find out where his enemy was concealed. Much as I admired the noble creature, I looked at his enormous horns, and reflected upon the danger which we were in.

Just then, Monäi rested his rifle on one of the branches of our tree, aimed deliberately at the caribou, and pulled the trigger. Unfortunately the cap missed fire, and the caribou at once discovering our place of ambush, rushed towards us, bellowing fearfully. Flight and defence seemed now alike impossible, for we were lying down in the snow, and I expected nothing less than to feel the sharp horns of the caribou tickling my ribs, when Mr. Howard's noble dog rushed forward and seized the animal by the lip. Fortunately for us, Jack held on tightly, although the caribou hammered him against the tree as if he would break every bone in his body. In spite of this, however, the noble dog held on bravely.

Whilst the unequal combat (resembling that of the lion and the fly) was going on, Monäi tried to hamstring the caribou. The creature perceived his intention at once, and wheeling round with the rapidity of lightning, would have killed the Indian on the spot, if he had not struck into empty space. Monäi had thrown himself once more upon

his belly, and the hoofs of the caribou had only wounded him slightly in the shoulder. Mr. Howard had by this time reloaded his rifle, but the powder had been damped by the snow-water and refused to burn.

At last the caribou succeeded in throwing off Jack, and dashed at once upon Monäi. The Red Skin now seized him by the horns, and a terrible struggle commenced, Jack managing once more to fix his teeth in the neck of the caribou. In a moment, however, Mr. Howard rushed up with his knife in hand, and plunged it up to the hilt in the breast of the colossal brute. With a last effort the caribou tossed Monäi up into the air, and gave up the ghost with a terrific bellow.

I must confess that whilst this struggle was going on I was seized with too much terror to be able to render any assistance. I had not even the presence of mind sufficient to put on my snow-shoes and reload my gun. Let not those of my brethren in St. Hubert who have never found themselves half buried in snow, with the antlers of a wild caribou menacing them with almost certain death, judge me too severely.

At last, we could approach the king of the back-woods, now lying dead at our feet. Mr. Howard's ball bad penetrated below the shoulder, so that he must ultimately have died of that wound.

"But," cried Mr. Howard to Monäi, who was

lying on his back in the snow, "how is it with you, Red Skin? Are you wounded?"

"The caribou is strong," replied the Indian, "but man is stronger than he is. Brother, lay a plaster of this resin upon the wound, and it will heal."

Mr. Howard forthwith spread some of this novel remedy upon a handkerchief folded four times, and laid it upon the shoulder of the Red Skin.

"What has become of your caribou?" said he presently, as he tended the Indian. "Did you hit him?"

"To be sure I did. I'll wager my rifle against the rustiest musket you can find that he's very bad by this time."

"Well, Jack is on his scent; there he goes. Put on your snow-shoes and go after him. The blood will guide you without fail. If you get within shot, don't fire until you are quite certain. I'll follow you directly I have seen to Monäi; and besides, I must dry my rifle. Be sure, however, that I shan't be long after you. Off with you." I started off eagerly, following the bloody track which the dog was scenting. As I advanced, I could see that the caribou had slackened his speed and sunk several times to the ground. My self-conceit made me very anxious to finish my caribou before Mr. Howard and Monäi joined me, and I flew along the snow until I came to a torrent which the frost had been quite

unable to arrest. There I lost all traces of the caribou, but Jack's paws indicated the road to follow, and soon I heard very distinctly the repeated barking of the noble dog.

The further I advanced the more rapid became the torrent, and at a distance of about a hundred yards before me, its waters suddenly disappeared into an abyss, forming a cascade of considerable height. Beyond the whirl of this picturesque cataract the stream was frozen over, and along the banks the surging waters had been transformed into layers of ice, whilst from the pine branches which dipped into the water depended rows of icy stalactites, giving the scene a very fantastic appearance.

Ten feet above the fall, on an isolated rock which stood in the midst of the waters, was the caribou that I had shot at. The current was so rapid all around that if his foot had slipped he must have gone over the fall. The faithful Jack had not deemed it prudent to attack the animal in his dangerous retreat, but when I arrived he became so excited, that to prevent him from getting into mischief I had to put him into leash and tie him to the foot of a tree.

The caribou had chosen a refuge where it was difficult to attack him, and how he had got there was a mystery to me. On either side of him were perpendicular banks, and before him the yawning chasm, which seemed to await its victim.

When I had sufficiently admired this romantic spectacle, which was well calculated to astonish a European, I drew as near as the unfavourable nature of the ground would permit. Directly the caribou saw me he raised his head, which was furnished with splendid antlers, shook it with rage, and seemed to dare me to the combat. In doing so, he offered me his chest, which was as ample as that of a bull. I must confess that I was not sorry that the torrent was between me and this formidable brute. However, I raised my rifle, took deliberate aim, and hitting the caribou between the eyes, over he fell dead. In his last effort, the animal gave a bound into the stream, and was carried over the fall in a moment. Directly afterwards, I saw the enormous bulk of my caribou rising above the water, and whirling away among the blocks of ice at the bottom of the abyss.

"Well hit," cried Mr. Howard, who arrived just in time to see the result of my shot, "let's make haste and recover our game."

After making a long circuit, we got down into the valley at the foot of the cascade; but, to our amazement, the caribou had disappeared.

"Forward! forward!" cried my friend, "the dog will guide us. See there, he's hunting the scent down the stream."

Five minutes afterwards, we found the caribou carried quietly down the current, and Jack, who had

jumped into the water, holding him fast by the ear and doing his best to drag him ashore. Without losing a moment, Mr. Howard ran down the stream and threw the trunk of a fallen tree across so as to bar the passage of the carcase. With the help of this, we managed to get it ashore.

"It is too late now, my friend," said Mr. Howard, "to carry our game home, so we must take care the wolves don't get at him. Let us make haste and disembowel him, and hang him up to that high branch out of the reach of mischief."

This was soon done, and leaving the caribou out of harm's way, we took our way towards the log-cabin, by the light of a brilliant moon and stars that shone like diamonds.

Monäi had got there before us. Upon a sleigh similar to that which he had made the day before, he had brought home the caribou which Mr. Howard had killed, and the magnificent head and horns of the creature already graced the interior of our hut,—a splendid trophy of a grand day's sport.

THE GRIZZLY BEAR.

The life of an Indian trapper is varied daily by acts of skill and courage which require the pen of Fenimore Cooper to describe them properly. Each

tribe of these children of the prairie has its heroes, who have given proofs of their merits in every way: one, by the unerring instinct with which he can track his enemy down; another, by the number of wild animals he has killed. To be a great hunter is to achieve a high position, an elevated rank among the Red Skins. In the eyes of these people it confers a title equal to that of a prince in Europe, and the exploits which have gained for him this position are to the copper-coloured hero exactly what medals and decorations are to the civilized soldier.

In the wilds where the Osages live (at about the 38th degree of latitude), the hunter will often have a chance of meeting the grizzly bear (*Ursus ferox*), the most formidable animal in the North American forests,—the creature insensible to wounds, whose habits are very uncertain, and whose strength enables him to crush into a mummy the victim who falls within his grasp. The Indian warriors of every tribe esteem no ornament more highly than the claws of the grizzly bear, strung together so as to form a collar for their muscular necks. This ornament, with that of an eagle's feather—the plumage of an eagle *shot flying*—which the Red Skin fixes in the middle of the tuft of hair which he wears on the top of his head, gives him an air of audacity and conscious prowess worthy of the first rank in a nation of warriors.

The fire lighted under the shelter of a rock, around which the Indians assemble to spend their evening, is not more bright and sparkling than the wit and eloquence with which these children of the wilds describe their hunting adventures. Whilst you listen to them, the hours fly by, and the time for repose arrives only too soon. Sometimes during these animated recitals, an old sachem, who has not spoken two words during the whole of the day, begins to talk. At first he babbles like a woman, but presently growing animated by his subject, he grows eloquent upon the exploits which have rendered his eventful life remarkable. But there is no story among them all comparable to that which the chief has to tell of his conflict with the grizzly bear. The death of a foe slain in mortal combat loses its interest, if it be told after that exciting adventure.

We Europeans, accustomed to more innocent and more monotonous kinds of sport (the most dangerous of which is hunting the wild boar), can scarcely believe in these perilous encounters, these adventures which make the heart beat strongly in the bosom; and in our scepticism we are usually tempted to treat as falsehoods all that we hear of the hunting stories of the backwoods.

I have often listened in the tent of the Red Skins to the stories of these men, who, living amid the mighty solitudes and the primeval forests of the

New World (beside which the largest forests of Europe are but thickets), have no need to deepen the shadows of the picture to make it stand out more conspicuously. The reality is too sublime and too terrible to afford exaggeration. The Indian may not have profited by civilization, but then he has avoided a great deal of its contamination. In my opinion, boasting and exaggeration are strong proofs of weakness, and these two proofs of degeneracy have not yet reached the far off prairies of North America.

Generally speaking, the true hunter, whether he belong to the white or the copper-coloured race, has extraordinary gifts of sight, touch, smell, and hearing, which practice developes every day. An unfortunate man, who is blind, deaf, and dumb, can clothe, feed, and take care of himself by the sense of touch; he can recognise his friends in the same way, for it is through this single sense that his instinct is constantly acting. So the trapper of the backwoods has a power of vision rendered so perfect by practice, that the lightest trace upon the leaves, the barks of the trees, or the soil, presents traces clearly perceptible and intelligible to him, showing him a track which to all others would be as invisible as that which a bird leaves in the air as it flies through space.

It is this sense which guides the Indian in his pursuit after man or beasts of the chase; it is this

extraordinary divination which, when cultivated to the utmost extent, compels the "pale-face" to admit that the Red Skin is his superior in the American prairie; for the best hunter is he who can follow the most difficult trace in the readiest manner, and who leaves no print where he places his own foot.

The trappers who hunt the grizzly bear have nothing but their power of vision to guide them, but that sense is even more unerring than the sense of smell in the dog. The print of a bear's paw upon the leaves, the broken twigs and branches, the form where it has laid down, are more readily discovered than the animal itself; and the experienced trapper can describe at once the animal he is following, its sex, weight, and age. Sometimes he will abandon the track after following it up for some time, on discovering that it is only a small bear; sometimes because it is a she bear with cubs; sometimes because it is too fat, and he knows, therefore, that its flesh must be in bad condition. These points distinguish the true hunter from the mere sportsman. The former can run down his game without any assistance, whilst the latter must have dogs and all the best apparatus of the chase.

The means employed in America for destroying the grizzly bears are almost as numerous as the bears themselves. These creatures cannot all be attacked by a uniform process, and this is why they

are so difficult to kill. The stratagem which has served its turn once, may, the next time it is employed, betray the hunter into the embraces of the bear; and this enormous brute, whose strength will enable it to catch up a horse and carry it off to devour it, makes but short work of a single man if it gets hold of him.

Grizzly bears (like lions and tigers) usually hide themselves during the day, and they betake themselves to caves during the winter, when the soundness of their slumbers is in proportion to the intensity of the cold. They conceal themselves in these retreats about the end of autumn, and only quit them when the snows of winter are melted, and spring has caused the herbage to burgeon on the prairies. It sometimes happens that one of these caves is inhabited by two bears, but the case is a rare one, for the unsociable temper of these creatures is proverbial in the States; usually they prefer a solitary life.

The trapper discovers the lair of the bear either by his own instinct or by the knowledge which he has of the forest, and when once the animal is discovered, it must be attacked in its cave, without hesitation and without fear. The first thing the trapper does when he is about to attack the bear in his den, is to examine all around the cave which he is about to penetrate. By this means he ascertains whether it is a sociable brute or a solitary one, for

if the bear has a companion it is wise to leave the pair to themselves. He will also be able to ascertain the age of the creature, the time which has elapsed since he retired to his den; and this wonderful perspicacity of divination is one of the most extraordinary qualifications of the Red Skins. The most experienced European hunter would be puzzled to say which of two caverns was tenanted by a bear; but a trapper will say: "Judging by the marks which the bear has left outside, I am sure that it hasn't been out for three months. See here; the herbage is not trodden down, and there's no mark upon the ground but these foot-prints, all of which are turned towards the inside of the cave; therefore I know he's at home. There's only one bear there, because the foot-prints are regular, and all alike in every respect. I know it's a heavy bear by the size of the paws, and very fat, because the hinder paws don't come up to the fore paws in walking, as they always do with a thin bear."

This is the kind of judicious observation which a hunter will make, and mysterious as they may be at first sight, when they are explained to you, you cannot fail to perceive and applaud the ability with which Nature has instructed her children. How is it (some one may ask) that the grizzly bear is so formidable to a whole party of hunters, who encounter it in the open forest, when a single man may fearlessly attack him in his cave and slay him?

Simply because the hunter comes upon the creature in the dark, when his limbs are stiffened by frost, and when therefore he falls an easy victim. Three gifts, however, are necessary to the success of the enterprise, and if any of these be wanting, neither quickness of sight, coolness, nor skill, or any two of them, can protect for a moment the hunter who has the audacity to attack the grizzly bear in his den. As soon as the trapper has gained all the information to be obtained from *outside* the cave, he takes a candle made of mingled wax and tallow, with a thick wick, capable of producing a very brilliant flame. The rifle must be his only arm, a knife being of no use, a hand-to-hand combat being impossible. The trapper then lights his candle and advances into the cave, without knowing from which side to expect the attack of the bear. As soon as he gets in, he sticks the light into a crevice of the rock, and crouches into the first hiding-place to await the appearance of the bear. Presently comes a terrible growl; it is the bear awaking. He shakes his shaggy hide, gapes like a creature roused from his slumbers, and makes a step forward. The trapper remains motionless, with his rifle all ready, and waits anxiously for the bear to advance so that he can get a fair shot at him. Retreat is no longer possible for him, and all depends upon the accuracy of his aim and the dryness of the powder with which his rifle is loaded. If his bullet deviates a hair's

breadth from the straight line he is a dead man. The common brown bear has an extraordinary tenacity of life, and sometimes after being wounded will fight for hours together, but the grizzly bear is more terrible still. The thickness of its fur and the strength of its bones seem to protect its heart effectually from the bullets, and its brain is encased in a skull which is as hard as granite. When a bullet hits the grizzly bear in the middle of its forehead, it is flattened as if it had struck against an iron plate. The middle of the eye is the only certain place to aim at, for it is the only road for the bullet to penetrate the brain and paralyse the strength of the gigantic brute.

The bear advances towards the candle and raises its paw to strike it down; at the same moment the Red Skin fires, and from the darkness which ensues a cheer may be heard celebrating the victory of the conqueror. The trapper has killed the grizzly bear.

During my stay among the Cherokee Indians, in a village near the Creek River, one of the Red Skins stated in my presence that he expected a fine day's sport on the morrow, for he had discovered the lair of a grizzly bear. I asked to be allowed to accompany him. Next morning a large number of the men in camp followed us, and we had scarcely made our way a mile through the cotton plants and creepers, before the Indian assured me that he had come upon traces of the animal. Guided by him,

we advanced towards an enormous tree, at least thirty yards in circumference. It was a gigantic maple of great age, and in this the Indian assured me the bear had taken up his abode. I never witnessed anything more admirable than the cool courage with which this man prepared himself for the dangerous encounter. A ferocious joy sparkled in his eyes as, throwing off his blanket and brandishing his formidable knife, he warned us with a look to keep the most profound silence. The other Indians and myself climbed the neighbouring trees, and the Red Skin entered the lair of the grizzly bear.

In a short time we heard a terrible growling, and not long afterwards the Indian came forth declaring that the bear was dead. We all descended, and two Cherokees entering the narrow entrance into the bole of the tree, fastened a rope made of bindweed to the hind legs of the creature, and drew out an enormous bear, weighing at least five hundred pounds. By means of the rope the carcass was hung up about ten feet above the ground, and we returned to the camp on the Creek, the Indians leaving sundry indications of the road by breaking off twigs of the trees. On our arrival four squaws were sent to cut up the animal and bring back his skin and the meat.

I will not say that the feast which we enjoyed off the flesh of our grizzly friend was epicurean, for I

am rather inclined to support the opinion of my dear friend Alexandre Dumas on the subject of bear *beef*-steaks. In the States they sell bear haunches just as in Paris they sell haunches of the roebuck. It is not a tender meat, and the flavour reminds you of a mixture of beef and pork, with a coarseness of texture.

Here is an anecdote of which I myself am one of the principal heroes. The scene is upon a slope of the Alleghanies. I was returning, accompanied by two friends, from a sporting expedition after ducks, teal, and such like. The snow covered the bank to which we had made fast our boat. A forest was before us, and our guide pointed out at the foot of a tree a heap of leaves, moss, and dead branches, with an opening through the midst. He declared that it was the lair of a grizzly bear.

With the help of an axe which he carried at his belt, our guide cut down a young tree and sharpened the end of it. He thrust this into the opening, and had scarcely done so before the bear rushed out. Our guide received him with such a cut across the head that he gave a roar and speedily retreated into his lair. The spear was once more poked in, but there was no sign. I proposed sending a bullet in to see what would be the result, and fired into the opening. A few seconds afterwards out came a cub bear, no longer than a fox. It rushed forth and jumped into the lake. There we soon shot it and

brought it ashore. After some time another shot was fired into the opening, but still nothing stirred; the silence was profound. We then resolved to clear away the branches and the moss from the entrance, and see what was the state of the case. At the further end of the lair lay a she bear, quite dead. The axe of our guide had opened her skull; but the chance bullet which I had fired had hit her mortally. As my gun was the only one of the calibre there was no doubt about it; so I and the guide shared the honours of victory.

I have another story of a grizzly bear, which was told me by the hero of it himself. During my stay at St. Louis, I had occasion to mix a great deal with some of those adventurous traders who carry on such a lucrative trade in the American desert. They travel about for six months or more, and go from one tribe to another, with their wagons and servants, until all their goods are sold. They then return to Fort Leavenworth, bringing skins, gold, and other precious commodities with them, which give them a profit of about five hundred per cent. The majority of those with whom I became acquainted traded west of the Mississippi.

One of the most venturesome, and at the same time most fortunate, of these traders was John Jeffery, an Englishman by birth, who had gained a nice little fortune by his excursions among the Red Skins, and was beginning to be desirous of retiring.

He was not only a very able man in his business, but a very skilful hunter, and one of the most intelligent explorers of the North American desert. I once had occasion to do him a service, and he gave me in return all the information I required. And yet the service was not a very important one. A slave was put into prison, and I had obtained his liberation.

I was quite at a loss to account for the warmth with which Jeffery thanked me for my good offices, and questioned him on the subject. "Well," said he, "I ought to take care of Sambo, for he once saved my life."

"Saved your life!" I cried in astonishment; "why, how did that happen?"

"True enough," said he. "Ten years ago I bought him. He was then only a child twelve years old, though he looked much older. He was then very ill of fever, and I took him home and cured him."

"Then you saved his life before he saved yours," said I.

"Very likely; though he might have got over it without me. These niggers are terribly hard-lived. However, I was taking a journey with a trail of wagons to Santa Fé. I had ten black servants from Mozambique, and the rest were Canadians. I had picked up the most of them at St. Louis. During the journey I made several hunting excursions, leaving the wagons to the servants. They were well

was that alarmed them, I fired my two barrels into the midst of the herd and hit one of the largest of them. My men followed my example, but with no result. When lo, the butt of my gun had scarcely quitted my shoulder before an enormous grizzly bear issued forth from the brushwood and advanced slowly towards us. He was not a hundred yards off, and there was no time to reload. I was seized, I must confess, with such terror, that for a few seconds I stood stock still, not knowing what to do; but I soon saw that we had only one way out of the position. When the Red Skins attack the grizzly bear in a body, they have a way of sitting down quite close to each other, waiting for the enemy's attack. The brute chooses one of them to attack and rushes on. Sometimes the victim is killed at the first blow, but more frequently he gets off with a wound. The others throw themselves at once upon the monster, and bury their knives deeply in the most vital parts. In this way, they will sometimes vanquish a grizzly bear without any of their number being very seriously injured.

"This was the only chance we had, so I determined that we should all sit down close to each other, hoping that the brute would hesitate long enough to give us the opportunity of reloading. 'Sit down; sit down,' I cried, kneeling on the ground and beginning to reload, but, on looking round quickly, I found that all my men had

run off on seeing the bear, and were already half way up the hill which lay between us and the encampment. Sambo had run off with them, thinking that I would run too; but that would have been of little use, for I was nothing like so agile as they were. It was only on arriving close to the camp that the poor fellow discovered his mistake.

"Well, there was I face to face with the grizzly bear, and if I had fled with my men, he would in all probability have caught me before I had run twenty yards, because I should certainly have been the last. Not only was my gun unloaded, but whilst we were digging the pit, I had handed my hunting-knife to Sambo, finding it somewhat in the way. I was therefore entirely disarmed, and I made up my mind that it was all over with me, and 'God have pity on my poor children,' thought I, and then I awaited the rush of the grizzly bear.

"He, however, seemed to be in no hurry. He came on slowly, and when he was within about a dozen yards of me he crouched on the ground like a cat, looking at me fixedly. I followed his example by sitting down, and looking at him as intently as I could. I remembered what I had read about the power of the human eye, and, as a last resource, resolved to try the experiment. Unfortunately it was a failure; the bear shut his eyes, and looked to the right and left of me, but that was the only effect. Presently, however, he folded his paws one

wards that the men, urged on by Sambo, had armed themselves and came to the top of the hill; but directly they saw the bear turn round and look at them, they took to their heels in mortal terror. Once more the bear resumed his position opposite to me, blinked his eyes, and seemed as if he was going to sleep.

"As the day advanced, I heard a roar coming from the distance, and the noise seemed to disturb my friend. It sounded like the roar of a female bear seeking for her mate. The bear rose, sniffed, and walked about as if he were troubled; but he kept silent, and the lady's voice grew fainter and fainter, as if she were retreating. The prospect of her approach had put me in a mortal fright, for it struck me at once that if she came up and happened to be hungry, the feast would commence without further delay. Very likely this idea occurred to the old rascal himself, and he judged it better to keep the treat all to himself, for he gave her no indication of his whereabouts.

"At length night drew on. There were stars, but no moon. I could only perceive objects at a short distance, the bear itself looking like a heap of fur in front of me. That he was not asleep, but was watching every movement, I felt quite certain, for his eyes were turned towards me, and shone like live coals. I had but one hope of deliverance, and that was that weariness might put him to sleep

before he had made up his mind to attack me. To avail myself of this poor chance, however, it was absolutely necessary for me to keep awake, which was not very easy, for I was weighed down with fatigue, not having slept for thirty-six hours, or eaten anything for twenty-four. The balmy freshness of the night, too, after the heat of the day, seemed to invite me to repose. A profound quiet reigned all around, and I had the greatest difficulty in keeping my eyes open.

"From time to time I felt myself giving way, and then roused myself with a feeling of dread that the bear was about to rush upon me. I felt as if I were in a condemned cell, and was to be executed next morning, for I was certain that with the morrow's dawn the bear's appetite would return.

"Two or three hours after night had set in, I could hear the noises of the wild animals going towards the watering-place. Some of them seemed to pass close to us, but I could not see them. The bear, however, could evidently see them, for he raised his head and looked at them as they went by. I had now abandoned all hope that he would leave me, and I had resolved what to do in the last extremity, when he made his attack. I held my rifle in my left hand, and wound my handkerchief round the right, determined that when the creature made his final rush, I would thrust the barrel across his jaws

and then my hand and arm into his throat. Of course, I did not expect to escape in this manner, but I was determined not to give in without a struggle, or, at any rate, trying to do my enemy as much mischief as I could.

"Presently, the bear got up with a savage growl, and I thought that the moment had arrived. However, he stood still, growling furiously, and looking over my head, until I began to think that another animal of the same kind might be crawling up behind me, and that *my* bear was objecting to a division of the spoil. Whatever it was, he seemed quite uncertain what to do, until, apparently making up his mind, he prepared to spring—when suddenly there came from behind me a fearful howl, and the neighbourhood was lit up by an unexpected flame. The howling lasted for a minute or two, and then a human form, apparently all on fire, leapt into the space between me and the bear. On this, the creature gave a terrible cry of fear rather than of rage, and, with a bound, disappeared in the darkness. Then it was that I recognised Sambo, who held around him some branches of trees which he had lighted, and was waving about frantically, leaping and howling in the most frenzied manner, looking far more like a devil than the guardian angel that he really was to me. He was so terrified himself, however, that he could scarcely find strength to cry, 'Load your gun, massa, load

your gun. The bear will come back. Load your gun.'

"It was good advice, and I was not slow to follow it as quickly as I could. Getting up, I found myself almost paralysed with stiffness, but I managed to load the rifle, and then we hastened off in the direction of the encampment. Sambo ran on in front, carrying a torch in his hand, and leaping and howling like one demented, to frighten the wild beasts. At length we reached the encampment, and when I had satisfied my hunger, I asked my deliverer to tell me what had occurred during my hours of peril. The poor fellow had been vainly endeavouring all day to stimulate the other men to come to my rescue. They had made one demonstration in the morning, as I told you, but their courage utterly failed them. When night came, Sambo made up his mind to try and rescue me single-handed, and he had resorted to this ingenious expedient:—He had armed himself with a large frying-pan which he had smeared with powder, damped so as to burn slowly, and then putting straw over it with a little dry powder in the midst, he had crowned the whole with a heap of small twigs and dry sticks. By creeping very cautiously he had managed to get within a hundred yards of us before the bear began to suspect his approach. When the bear first noticed him, it was when he rose to his feet and began to growl so furiously.

'When I heard him growl,' said poor Sambo, 'I thought I must have died.' However, he had managed to keep up his courage, and by crawling through the herbage inch by inch, had got to within a few feet of us. Now was his time; he struck a light with a phosphorus match, set fire to his frying-pan, and then springing forward, he had managed to produce such a diabolical effect that the bear was fairly frightened.

"So now," added Mr. Jeffery, "you will readily understand why I am so partial to the brave fellow, who had both the wit and the courage to save my life—though perhaps he would not have had enough of either to save his own."

"But what became of your grizzly bear? I suppose you heard no more of him?"

"There you are mistaken. I owed him something for the fright and inconvenience that he had caused me, and as, moreover, he was evidently a 'man-eater,' it was desirable to put a stop to his maraudings. I felt certain that he would not go far as long as my horses remained in the neighbourhood; and as I knew that two friends upon whom I could depend were pursuing our tracks, I waited until they came up. We then organised an expedition with a full complement of men and dogs, and for two days we hunted up the old cannibal without being able to draw him from his lair.

"At last, one of my friends got a chance at him, and killed him on the spot. It was cleverly done, for the ball went in at the right shoulder, and passed out at the left side. I gave the victor a hundred dollars for the skin, and had it stuffed, in commemoration of the day that I passed face to face with the most formidable creature that infests the North American wilds."

Such was Mr. Jeffery's story, which I leave for the consideration of the reader, without further comment.

THE BLACK BEAR.*

In 1847, an influential New York journal to which I was then contributing, sent me to the camp of General Taylor as special correspondent, and I employed a portion of my time in exploring the neighbourhood of the camp with a new friend whom I picked up there. One morning I started alone for San Antonio de Bexar, one of the extreme outposts on the frontier. On arriving there, I found the artillerymen who were quartered there in a very bad humour, and the cause of it was very obvious; a month had passed since they had had a shot at the enemy.

* *Ursus americanus.*

What could men do in inactivity who had become accustomed to a life of fighting almost daily? They were vexed with everybody, and not only accused the Indians and Mexicans of being in conspiracy against them, but they even reviled the sun, moon, and stars, which they said were condemning them to a life of *ennui* and inaction. By way of some distraction, they proposed a little expedition to the other side of Rio Grande, to sack some Mexican villages there, or a tour in the mountains for the purpose of setting fire to some *haciendas*, merely by way of giving them an opportunity of getting out of their hive and keeping their rifles in practice. After a long deliberation on this important subject, a brave captain, named Sharpe, decided that some of them would go into the mountains on an expedition after Red Skins.

We were all delighted with the prospect of the excursion, and certainly it was a kind of pleasure which is not readily within the reach of every one; for it was necessary to cross an uncultivated desert, to pass through the Indian and Mexican population, to expose ourselves to the greatest danger, even of death itself, and all for the satisfaction (as we said) of keeping our hands in and giving our legs a stretch.

One of the motives which induced Sharpe to select the route towards the San Saba Mountains was because he was both a sportsman and an

epicure, and he expected to pick up upon the road a bear or so, and to gather a stock of wild honey. The captain had an excessive fondness for this sweetmeat.

The prospect of getting the honey also proved sufficiently tempting to a stout little man who, like myself, had only recently arrived in the States, and on the day fixed for starting, he presented himself before the party figged out in the most extraordinary fashion, armed with two old pistols and a spear, which he maintained was the best possible weapon against a bear. From his saddle-bow depended a large tin box, destined to receive the honey which he expected to gather on the mountains. Thus equipped he appeared to be the most determined of us all. It was in vain that we endeavoured to persuade him to replace his spear by a rifle; he obstinately refused to do so, and in spite of our jokes he maintained that he would do such wonders with the spear that he would put to shame all those who carried fire-arms. So saying, he drove his spurs into the sides of his short-tailed pony and started off at a gallop, with all the party at his heels.

It doesn't take long for artillerymen to get ready for such an expedition. Every man was indeed fully equipped for whatever might happen. A rifle, a brace of pistols, a hunting-knife, a tin porringer, a gourd-bottle, a buffalo robe, a lasso, a bridle, saddle, and spurs, formed the necessary provision.

The rest might be left to chance, and no one felt much anxiety about the day's dinner. In those countries, the rifle provides its master with as much of both food and clothing as he can possibly require.

Our party had certainly a very picturesque appearance. We were all dressed in furs cut according to each man's fancy, for these American soldiers followed their own taste in matters of costume rather than any regulation uniform. The style was a mixture of Indian, Mexican, and American fashions, and there were no two guns from the same manufactory. The oldest hands carried long single-barrelled rifles, pistols, and knives of the old style; whilst those who, like myself, had only just come from the States, carried small arsenals of novel invention, six-shooter revolvers, double-barrelled guns, and other arms of the same kind, handsome enough, no doubt, but calculated to embarrass very considerably the sportsman on the march. Some of our horses were mustangs (wild horses), and others were of the American breed, all good-looking animals, with the exception of the little man's pony, which did not belong to any known category of horses.

Our party of soldier-trappers, after leaving the streets of the wretched little town of San Antonio, sallied forth upon the plain which stretched before us like a sea. It was a glorious spectacle to see the

horses bounding and careering, and our imaginations became quite excited as we drew nearer and nearer to the line of mountains which lay before us far away. After a rapid gallop across a charming country, of an aspect as various as the changing scenes of a panorama, we arrived on the banks of a little stream where we resolved to pass the night. The encampment was a joyous one; we did honour to the contents of our gourds, and, as there were no foes in the neighbourhood, we all went to sleep without placing sentinels. Great was our vexation at finding, when we awoke in the morning, that several of our horses had disappeared, and among them the noble animal which I had borrowed. We had been tracked by some Mexican thieves, who were too well acquainted with the habits of the soldiers, and who, knowing how careless they would be on the first night of camping out of doors, had taken advantage of our jollification, and the consequent soundness of our slumbers, to help themselves to our horses.

Though we were all very angry at this occurrence, it was impossible to restrain a shout of laughter at the discovery that the sorry little pony of our short friend had not escaped the attentions of the thieves; but the little brute, whose temper was greatly in excess of his size, had attacked his assailant furiously and forced him to retreat, evidently not without damage, for at the feet of the pony was found a

battered sombrero, and the ground bore marks of more than one fall which the fellow had sustained in his endeavours to carry off the brute. This vigorous defence caused the pony to rise a hundred per cent. in the appreciation of the party.

The consequence of this misfortune was to compel us to await the return of the messenger whom we sent to the nearest "hacienda," with orders to purchase the animals necessary to supply the dismounted cavalry. We did this with some anxiety, because, although we were sure to find horses of some kind, much depends in similar expeditions upon the quality of your mount, and I certainly regretted the noble animal of whose services I had been deprived.

When the detachment arrived and I was introduced to the animal which had been destined for me, I was agreeably surprised at finding him a very handsome creature, and full of fire and vigour; although my joy was speedily and considerably mitigated by the discovery that he had never before been mounted. What could I do with an untamed mustang; a creature as strong as a buffalo, it is true, but as wild as a catamount? My companions made merry at my embarrassment, and advised me to give a few dollars to one of the Mexican guides to change horses for a day or two, during which he would be sure to render my new acquisition as pliable as a glove.

In a twinkling, the tawny horseman was on the back of my steed and off like the wind, leaving me to the jokes of my companions, who declared, nevertheless, that in two days I would have a first-rate horse. The Mexican joined us again in the evening, bringing the horse home with him covered with foam, and ready to sink through fatigue. He had galloped him some forty miles, and when he had stabled him for me, he assured me that he would do very well, and be "*muy buonito.*" The bottom which he had exhibited in enduring so severe a trial was the best proof of his excellence. For all this, I was so afraid that my new horse would be spoiled by the violent mode of conducting his education, that I determined to mount him myself next day.

In the morning, I went up to my horse full of confidence, totally disregarding the warning cry of the Mexican: "*No, no, por Dios!*" I nearly paid dearly for my temerity, for the animal lashed out furiously with its hind legs just as I was going to lay my hand upon its mane, and its heels came so close to my face, that I could read upon its shoes a very significant warning, not to approach too near without the greatest precaution. Furious at this reception, and indignant at what I called the ingratitude of a brute that I had wished to spare the ordeal of another day's training, I handed him over once more to my Mexican friend, with full permission

either to kill him, or to drive out the devil which possessed him. My permission was quite superfluous, but I have always thought that the creature understood what I said, and resolved therefore to be revenged in the manner which I shall presently describe.

My companions were all full of gaiety and courage, and certainly we were a very merry band. The life of adventure which they were leading formed the staple of the conversation, and I listened to the recital of some very astonishing adventures with lively interest. So the day passed without weariness, and in the evening the Mexican brought me my horse, broken, as he said, to perfection.

We had now quitted the pleasant and picturesque country through which the earlier stages of our journey had passed, and were travelling through a waste and sterile plain where there was nothing to rejoice the sight. There were neither hills, nor trees, nor even a single bush, to break the monotony of the surface. For three days, we travelled across this plain.

At last, in the evening, when we were beginning to find this monotony insupportable, we perceived on the horizon what seemed at first to be a line of dark clouds; they were the elevated summits of the San Saba Mountains. On beholding them, the little man, who had been bored more than any of us by the long ride across the prairie, became quite

lively. "Ha! ha!" cried he, "now we shall have some bear's meat. Ha, gentlemen" (here he brandished his spear with a martial air), "I'll bet a wager that the first we eat will be killed by me, and with this very spear which you have joked so much about. You may laugh; but I'll keep my word, and before to-morrow evening, too." As he uttered this bellicose defiance, the little man dug his spurs into the sides of his short-tailed pony so vigorously, that the steed, by no means admiring the proceeding, threw him, spear, baggage and all, clean over his head. You may guess how heartily we laughed; but the little man picked himself up again none the worse for his tumble, and mounted into the saddle again with wonderful agility.

When night drew on, we could distinguish the outline of the mountains very clearly, and the valleys which separated them. We encamped at the foot of the chain, and every heart beat high with expectation of the morrow, for we were now fairly in the country of the Indians, and might reasonably expect sport before another sun was down.

Very early next morning we were all under arms, and preparing for the adventures of the day with a solid and abundant breakfast.

As we approached the mountains, those rude masses of granite presented the most extraordinary appearance. They seemed to rise with abrupt

perpendicularity from the plain which surrounded them. They looked liked an army of Titans, several lines deep—the shorter ones being in the front rank, and the taller ones behind, until the hindmost seemed to hide their lofty heads in the clouds. These mountains were separated from each other by vast and deep valleys, into which we penetrated as we advanced. We were marching on in silence, absorbed in the contemplation of the magnificent scenery, when suddenly our attention was attracted by the loud cries and hallooings of our little friend.

"Come on," cried he, "come on! Here they are. I'll be in the middle of them!" and with that he galloped forward brandishing his spear, and urging on his pony to the top of its speed. Not a little surprised, I looked round and found my companions galloping after the little fellow with a half-serious, half-joking expression upon their faces. Three or four hundred yards before us were several huge dark-coloured objects moving about among the grass at the foot of the mountain nearest to us, and as one of these animals lifted up its head, I could see that they were gigantic bears, and I heard the voice of Captain Sharpe encouraging us to come on and thank, as he said, the bears for their politeness in coming out to receive us.

The majority of the party were galloping after their leader like so many madmen: for my part, I

was so astonished at the suddeness of the whole proceeding, that I was among the laggards. Not so, however, the brave little man. He was at least sixty yards ahead of every one, his plucky little pony charging at full speed the nearest bear. The animal on seeing the approach of these novel visitors, and not knowing what to make of it, sat up on its hind legs, roaring and looking round with a fierce and stupefied air. The little man rushed on and had put his spear in rest for the charge before the bear thought of taking flight. At last, however, he made up his mind and turned tail with that awkward shambling gait which is peculiar to his race. The little man was very soon after him, however, and succeeded in giving him several good smart prods behind.

This was too much for the patience of Master Bruin, who turned round sharply and seized the pony with its claws. The pony stopped short and backed, throwing its rider clean over its head. In his passage through the air, the little man described a summerset which, in spite of the danger in which he was, was comical enough to provoke general hilarity.

Happily for our hero, the pony was somewhat larger than he was, and consequently attracted all the notice of the bear. Thanks to this circumstance, the little gentleman got up, and running to a large oak which happened to be near, mounted it

with an agility which surprised us all. It was well for him that he did so, for the bear had now quitted the pony, and was close upon his heels.

The little man climbed up the tree as high as the branches could bear him, and holding on with his left hand, used the spear with his right, and kept the bear from getting up at him. To render the scene complete, the pony was capering about the foot of the tree like a mad creature, whinnying and tearing up the earth with its hoofs, as if it understood its master's peril and wished to help him out of it.

All this took place in a few seconds; and those who were nearest to the scene of action, perceiving that our friend had mounted up into the tree, took no further heed of him, but started off after the other bears. As for the rear-guard (of whom I was one), we were so busy laughing at the sport that, but for the intervention of Captain Sharpe, it would have gone hard with the little man. The captain, however, recovered his seriousness sufficiently to enable him to take good aim and put an end to the combat by a bullet through the bear's head.

There were then four bears left, all making for the mountain as rapidly as they could; and as the little man was now out of all danger, we left him to shift as well as he could, and hastened after the animals, hoping to overtake them before they quitted the plain. Turning round to have another look at

him, I saw the little man get down from the tree and attack the bear valiantly with his lance, for the brute, although severely wounded, was not yet dead.

The scene now became very animated, for the whole party divided itself into four groups, each of which started in pursuit of one of the four bears. These found the pursuit growing so hot, that, in despair of being able to reach the rocks before they were overtaken, they fled up the deep narrow valleys, of which mention has been made already.

It so chanced that a young Virginian and myself pursued the same bear; and following it up one of these gorges, we soon found ourselves separated from the rest of the party,—all of them being dispersed in different directions. It struck me all at once that my horse was becoming less and less manageable, for as soon as he perceived the scent of the bears he pricked up his ears, neighed, snorted, and manifested every sign of the greatest terror. Besides this, he began shying from side to side in such a manner as to render my seat very uncertain. The horse which the Virginian was riding seemed also in great terror, but he was more docile, and his master, being an excellent horseman, could keep him well in hand.

Whilst I was struggling with my horse, the bear had gained on us, and was fast approaching the mountain. My companion pursued him, and pre-

sently both the man and the bear were hidden from sight by a clump of large oaks, and in a moment afterwards I heard a double shot from the Virginian's gun.

Unwilling to miss my share of the sport, and determined to come up with the bear, I gave my horse his head, and drove my spurs into his sides. The brute shot off like an arrow, and in a few seconds I found myself on the other side of the clump of oaks face to face with the bear, whose ribs had been broken by the shots of my companion. The animal was writhing in agony and bellowing like a mad creature, grinding his teeth with rage, and displaying the red interior of as formidable a pair of jaws as ever I saw.

This spectacle seemed to change my horse to marble, as if fright had paralysed him completely. His body instantaneously broke out into a cold sweat that dropped off him like rain; his nostrils were distended, and his eyes grew wild and fixed. The shock of the sudden stoppage was terrible, but I managed to keep on, and endeavoured with whip and spur to make the creature move. It was all in vain; there he stood motionless, and a slight tremor of the muscles was the only recognition of the punishment which I could get from him. Furious at his obstinacy, I struck him over the head with my rifle, but it was of not the slightest use.

At the same moment (for all this happened almost with the rapidity of thought), and whilst the Virginian was reloading his rifle, we heard an explosion which sounded like the rumbling of thunder. It came from the mountain; and then we heard such a yell as no one can forget when he has once heard it. It was the war-cry of the Comanches, and at that same time we saw a body of men rushing on towards us. There was not a moment to be lost.

"The Indians are on us. Save yourself!" cried the Virginian, and turning his horse round, he started off in a gallop, crying "Save yourself! Save yourself!"

The advice was excellent, but how was I to follow it? My horse stood immovable and resisted every effort. As a last resource, I jumped off him and climbed up an oak in the hope of concealing myself. I had scarcely reached my hiding-place when a party of from twenty to thirty savages, all decorated with war paint, and their heads covered with feathers, entered the valley. They were the Comanches.

On perceiving my horse, which still remained motionless, the Red Skins halted. One of them approached the animal and seized it by the bridle; but the rest of the party, having now caught sight of the flying Virginian, rushed onwards in pursuit of him, with a yell that shook the very leaves around me. This terrible cry seemed to revive the energies

of my horse, for he started off as rapidly as he had come there, dragging after him the Red Skin, who held tight by the bridle. In a twinkling, they were out of sight, and it was not long before the last of the Comanches disappeared behind a spur of the mountain. Afterwards, I heard one or two shots, and then nothing more. I felt that I was abandoned in the terrible solitude, and could hear nothing but the growls of the bear dying at the foot of the tree.

These strange events had succeeded each other with such rapidity, that I felt in a state of utter confusion. I doubted whether I was not the sport of some dream. Here was I, three hundred miles from the outposts of civilisation, perched in a tree, without horse or friend, in the midst of what appeared to be eternal solitude. As soon as I could calm myself I began to reflect. I hoped that my companions would come in search of me. The idea of suicide occurred to me, but I banished it at once. I then thought that I would finish the bear, and provide myself with a stock of his flesh in case of necessity. For this purpose I drew my knife, and was about to put my project into execution, when a loud roar attracted my attention, and upon looking round I saw a round cat-like head resting between two branches of a tree. It was a panther, and as my gaze was fixed upon this new and terrible foe, the creature seemed not to see me, for its eyes were wandering all around, and its countenance wore any-

thing but an angry expression. Indeed, it looked so tame, that I should have felt tempted to make its acquaintance, if an accidental gape as it stretched itself leisurely among the branches had not, by exhibiting a fearful array of fangs, reminded me of the desirability of ridding the neighbourhood of so dangerous a foe. What was I to do? A shot from my rifle would bring the Red Skins back upon me, and I dreaded them even more than I did the panther. Altogether, I thought the most prudent plan was to climb up still higher, so as to place myself in such a position of vantage that I could only be attacked from below, and would dominate over my adversary. This I soon accomplished, and took my place among the upper branches of the oak, where I was perfectly well hidden by the leafy screen which surrounded me.

As the neighbourhood of the panther grew very embarrassing, I determined to try and get rid of its presence at all risks, and I thought it best to begin with gentle means. I took a buck shot out of my game bag and threw it towards the animal. It struck the leaves just over the panther's head and made it look around with an expression of considerable surprise. It could not see me, however, and had no suspicion of my presence. I took another shot and pitched that towards the panther. This time I hit the branch on which it was lying and startled the creature again; but still it could not see

me. A third hit it on the nose, and the panther, now fairly alarmed and evidently thinking that the neighbourhood was getting dangerous, sprang off the tree and went away growling. I saw it disappear up the valley, and although I watched for its return as long as it was daylight, I saw it no more.

Having got rid of this uncomfortable neighbour, I determined to descend and cut off some of the bear's meat, which I suspended from the branches of the oak. I then remounted the tree and climbed up so high that I could see all around, but nothing was visible except the heavens and the stars which were beginning to peep forth. I made my arrangements to pass the night as comfortably as possible under the circumstances, and stretched myself upon a forked branch with a heap of moss for a pillow. I even tried to sleep, but the hooting and flapping of some owls effectually prevented that. These birds seemed as if they were determined to keep me awake, for they never ceased flying round the tree, beating the air with their wings, and uttering mournful cries, their great staring eyes shining like carbuncles in the darkness.

When the moon reached its zenith, and its rays fell directly upon me, the country assumed a new aspect, and the valley, suddenly lit up, looked like a broad silver ribbon between the two dark-looking mountains which enclosed it. A herd of coyotes soon appeared to give the scene a terrible animation.

These beasts of prey, attracted by the smell of dead meat, arrived from all sides, and threw themselves ravenously upon the carcase of the bear. I was then rejoiced that I had taken the precaution of cutting off a supply of the meat and placing it out of the reach of the beasts of prey by suspending it from the branches of the oak. I need hardly say that the presence of the coyotes all night took away my desire for slumber, not only by their frightful howling, but from the fear of falling among them when asleep.

Day broke at last, and I could descend from the tree and eat a bear steak, broiled over a fire which I found means to light. I then quitted the valley where I had spent so uncomfortable a night, and regained the prairie which I had traversed the day before. The space before me was immense, and I could see no traces of any living being. I could recognise the tree where our little friend had had his battle with the bear, and there was the skeleton of the other bear which Captain Sharpe had killed. The bones had been picked clean by the coyotes during the night. The little man's spear was sticking between the ribs of the bear, for he had thrust it in so deeply that he had been unable to draw it out again. I climbed up to the top of a tree and looked carefully around, but there was nothing but boundless solitude and the silent desert. For a moment, it appeared to me as if I were the only creature in

the world, and as if the sun were shedding its light and heat for me alone.

I waited in this place for two days, vainly expecting the return of my friends, until my stock of bear's meat was quite exhausted, and I began to feel the pangs of hunger, and to give way to the torments of despair. Soon, however, the very excess of my misfortune recalled me to myself, and I determined to nerve myself against my fate. I cried out with all my strength to rouse myself from the state into which I was sinking.

"No," said I, "I will not die of want and hunger. If the coyotes can live in this frightful desert, so can I. I will have the agility of a panther, the sagacity of a dog, and the sight of an eagle. I will be as swift as the deer, and will fight hand to hand with the wild beasts of the forest. Die of hunger! a thousand times, no. Rather than that, I will light up fires over the prairie until the Comanches find me, and they shall either pity and spare me, or put me out of my misery at once."

Once more I climbed up a tree to seek for some signs of human life, but in vain. All round, to the distant horizon, there was nothing but the mountains and the plain. Then I came down again, and fell prone upon the grass.

I remained in this position for some time, and my brain grew excited with a thousand terrible fancies. A bird came and perched over my head.

By its black plumage and grey beak, I knew it to be a raven, and thinking that it had come to await my death, I regarded it as an evil omen. "Bird of evil," I cried, "begone! I am not for you, yet." But instead of being alarmed at my cries, the raven fluttered down upon the ground. At first I thought it was going to attack me; but presently I saw that it contented itself with picking up very peaceably a number of round objects which were scattered about. These objects attracted my attention, and to my great joy, I discovered that they were snails. The ground was covered with them, and I had no longer any dread of perishing from hunger. I got up immediately and collected a large quantity of the snails which I devoured with the keenest appetite.

Feeling my strength somewhat restored by this repast, I began to examine my situation a little more coolly. The only chance before me was to extricate myself from the desert plain. My life depended on doing so, and the sooner the better.

The first point to settle was, what direction should I take. I examined the position of the sun. It was then setting, and just about to sink. Our march had been westward, and therefore my road to San Antonio must lie towards the east. In the midst of that vast plain, I had no landmark to guide me; my shadow must serve me for a compass. The main thing was to keep that shadow behind me all the morning, and before me in the after-

noon. I kept my eyes too, fixed, as well as I was able, upon a certain point on the horizon so as to keep as much as possible in a straight line In this manner I walked all day long, and when night came, I halted near a spring, and searched about for snails. For the first two days, my supplies held out very well, but the third day and afterwards there came a dearth both of food and drink. The snails finally disappeared altogether, and there was such a scarcity of water, that I began to experience the twofold torture of hunger and thirst tempting me out of the straight line to search after food and water. Sometimes, I heard a sound of galloping, and, on looking up, saw a troop of mustangs in the distance, which fled away directly they perceived me, and before I could get within gunshot. Occasionally, I saw a deer rise from the deep herbage and scud away; alas! always out of distance—sometimes flocks of cranes flew overhead quite out of reach, and, although I fired at them and fancied I could hear the thud of the shot upon their feathers, I never had the satisfaction of seeing one of them drop. These were the only living creatures I saw, with the exception of some bull-frogs, loathsome creatures, which at any other time would have caused the most lively disgust, but which I devoured ravenously, and sought eagerly for more of this hideous game. Sometimes, indeed, I was followed by a few coyotes, but they kept at a

distance, as if waiting for my death, and I could not tempt one of them within reach of my gun. Soon there was a scarcity of frogs, as well as of snails and water. The further I advanced through the plain, the more deserted it became; yet still I dragged my weary way along.

Everything now maddened me, I was in such a state of nervous excitement. The noise of the flying cranes was painful to my ear, and the emanations from the soil were oppressive to my sense of smell. A fresh breeze made me reel and stagger like a drunken man. I began to entertain strange fancies. I thought I saw before me an army, bearing flags of a thousand different colours; I could see large sheets of water in the distance reflecting the rays of the sun—deceitful mirages which receded as I advanced towards them.

But it was during the night, chiefly, that I saw the most extraordinary sights. The stars seemed to be shooting arrows, and the moon showed me her teeth. I was trembling with cold, and thought I was plunged in an ocean of ice, for the howlings of the wolves were like the murmur of the waves and the noises of the storm. My blood boiled in my veins, and yet my limbs were paralysed, as if they were already seized by the cold hand of death. I thought that I was cut in half; that my body had disappeared, and that my feet were no longer connected with my legs. The torpor which weighed me down

ceded, however, occasionally to the pangs of hunger, and then giving way to a paroxysm of rage, I threw myself upon the ground, as if to browse upon the very grass beneath my feet.

For all this, I continued walking onwards, for even the motion assuaged the intensity of my sufferings. By a strange phenomenon, my wearied body occasionally regained the sense of its vigour and elasticity, and even in some of the fantastic visions which visited me I sometimes saw before me, as in a magnificent panorama, some of the sweetest scenes of my past existence, and the beings most dear to my heart, but all, in a manner, spiritualised. Then it was as if I were in a celestial world peopled by angels, who regarded me with a tender and touching air, shedding floods of tears over my sad destiny, and then whisking around me in the most voluptuous dances. I raised my arms as if to seize these enchantresses, when, lo! a frightful pang of hunger recalled me from the delightful dream, and awakened me to the horrible reality. Once more I was restored to life, but what a life!

In this plight I walked on for two long days. I had kept possession of my gun, but it seemed fearfully heavy, like the club of a giant. Its weight oppressed me cruelly, and I often thought it would be better to throw it away as a useless burden, but resisted the temptation, thinking that, if the

Comanches came up with me, at any rate I would not die without the glory of fighting for my life. Moreover, it was the only means I had of defending myself in the last extremity against the coyotes, and the idea of falling a prey to these ferocious brutes was insupportable to me.

Well-nigh dead with hunger, fatigue, and thirst, I felt myself incapable of struggling much longer against the fate which afflicted me, when suddenly I saw something in the distance that looked like a clump of trees. At this sight I summoned up all the strength remaining to me, and forgetting all my sorrow, I ran forward, crying out "Water! water! water!"

As I approached the spot, I could make out a few little hillocks, and soon selected the spot where a stream of water was probably flowing.

I was not deceived. In about an hour I reached the nearest hillock. It was covered with brushwood, and at the foot I saw what seemed to be a silver thread winding along. It was a stream of water. I threw my gun aside so as to get on faster, and cast myself down beside the long-wished-for stream, plunging my head deeply into it. *It was as salt as the water of the sea.* At this horrible disappointment, the blood rushed to my head, and I fell to the ground, losing all consciousness.

I do not know how long I remained in this position, but the coolness of the water, in which my

body was partly immersed, aroused me from my fainting fit. On regaining my senses, I felt calmer than I had done for some time; my mind was more tranquil, and yet I had been so bitterly disappointed. I thought over the efforts I had made to preserve my miserable existence, and I said to myself, "What is the use of struggling any longer against my fate, and, after all, what will death be but an end of my misery?" As this crossed my mind, a last caprice seized me, to die on a mossy bank under the shadow of the trees. I summoned up all my strength to reach that spot, but on rising from the ground I fell back again several times. At length, however, the desire of dying upon that mossy bank got such hold upon me that I dragged myself up, went to pick up my rifle, and crawled to the clump of trees. Here, at any rate, I would die in peace. I barely managed to reach the foot of the hill, and there I lay down upon the moss with my gun by my side. I now thought that my last hour was come, and shut my eyes, calmly awaiting death.

What visions I saw as I lay in this state, I cannot recall. I only know that, after some time, feeling a momentary accession of strength, I opened my eyes, and saw an enormous squirrel playing among the branches. On seeing this, the love of life returned, for I saw safety for my own life in the death of the poor squirrel. With feeble hands and failing

fingers I seized my gun, raised it to my shoulder, and fired. The squirrel fell dead upon my bosom. Raising myself up, I drew my knife and eat heartily of the squirrel, without any sort of culinary preparation. Confidence and strength returned, and with a feeling of thankfulness I stretched myself once more upon the bank and slept profoundly.

This sleep lasted twenty-four hours, judging by the time when I awoke; and when I had eaten the rest of the squirrel, I felt able to continue my journey, though with faltering steps, and with an oppressive feeling of weakness. After two hours' march, I saw in front of me three men on horseback driving a herd before them. Perceiving that they were Mexicans, I felt certain that I should get little help from them by fair means, so I presented my gun suddenly, and when they turned to fly I ordered them to stop on pain of death. I suppose there was something terrible in my aspect, for they obeyed me, and I compelled the best mounted of them to give up his horse to me, and then rode off, leaving them astounded at the adventure.

The motion of the horse caused me terrible pain, and I had soon to let go the reins and cling to the pummel of the saddle. I have no further recollection of what took place until I was received by the artillerymen at the gate of Bexar, and I heard a voice say, "Poor fellow, I never expected to see him again." I was assisted off my horse, and put

into a comfortable bed, where I was carefully tended. In a word, I was saved.

The little man of the spear had been slightly wounded, and he recounted to me all that happened to the party in the San Saba Mountains. The Comanches, finding our comrades dispersed in groups, had taken them in detail and at a disadvantage. Two had been killed, and several others left for dead.

Captain Sharpe had fallen into the hands of the Red Skins, and had been scalped—an operation from the consequences of which he subsequently died. Altogether, then, I had escaped very fortunately; but to this day, I cannot recall those terrible adventures without a shudder. I promised my friends at Bexar to commit them to writing, and I have kept my word; for it is not every sportsman who can say that he has been lost in the great American desert.

THE BISON, OR BUFFALO.*

The traveller when he has quitted Fort Leavenworth, on the extreme frontier of the State of Kansas, and close to that of Missouri, and has crossed the Arkansas river towards the north, soon

* *Bison americanus.*

finds himself upon those vast and verdant savannas, that flourishing Sahara the great American desert, of which no words can give an adequate description. The prairies (as they are called in the United States) are not immense flat plains, carpeted with clover, sainfoin, and lucern; they are undulating surfaces divided by innumerable streams, on whose banks grow stunted cotton-bushes and buffalo grass,—that plant which serves as forage for the ruminants of the desert, and whose long stalk is crimped like a lettuce,—with all manner of other kinds of plants, whose blue, red, white, and yellow flowers enamel the uncultivated soil and transform it into a splendid Aubusson carpet. These oceans of verdure, which sometimes attain a growth of four to five feet in height, are rippled by the breezes like the waves of the sea.

Nothing presents a more charming variety than the Flora of these blooming steppes. There the botanist may gather, as they are crowded up together, euphorbias and lilies of every tint and shade, some with white petals striped with black and rose colour, others with crimson edges and poppy-coloured calices. The flowers are all of the most brilliant colours; and myriads of butterflies hover among them upon painted wings, and bees search about for materials for their perfumed honey.

And yet, lively as the aspect of the prairies may be, it is impossible to avoid a feeling of melancholy

when the eye seeks in vain for the limits of that boundless space. Not a tree, not a mountain, to break the line of the horizon; the heavens themselves wear a grey and monotonous tint, when they are not charged with the heavy clouds which betoken the fearful storms which sweep across these solitudes, and overturn whatever opposes them. The wind then roars as in a mistral; and in the winter a fine icy snow takes the place of the rain, and covers the prairie with a spotless winding-sheet.

During the three fine seasons of the year, the buffaloes, deer, and wild horses range at will over these verdant solitudes, and thither also come various tribes of Red Skins, who divide the vast territory into hunting-grounds amongst them. Thither come the Osages, the Delaware Indians, the Creeks, the Cherokees, and some other tribes whose manners have been somewhat softened by contact with civilisation; and thither also come the Pawnees, the Comanches, and other warlike and still independent tribes, nomads of the prairies and of the Rocky Mountains.

The territory which I have been describing belongs, in fact, to none of these tribes; but, by a tacit arrangement amongst them, they have assumed the usufruct of the country, and share the right of hunting. Yet this understanding is by no means so exactly respected but that the various tribes

have to struggle for the defence of their rights. The hunting parties travel therefore in large numbers, and are armed so as to be always ready for a fight, or to repulse any attack that may be made upon them. Frequently, in my excursions across the prairies, I have come upon skeletons and bones bleaching in some obscure ravine, marking no doubt the scene of some deadly combat, and warning me of the perils of a journey across the great American desert.

One morning in the month of October, 1845, I found myself one of a party of eight on the summits of the chain of mountains on the west side of the Mississippi, two hundred miles from the great cataracts of St. Antoine. Five of us were on horseback, and the three others, who were born Canadians, and therefore fond of walking, and not to be fatigued, formed the rear-guard, and led two waggons which contained those provisions and utensils which civilised man requires when he undertakes a journey to the Far West. Three led saddle-horses also formed part of the convoy; and underneath the waggons were chained a couple of hounds of the Scottish breed, of that peculiar build and look which proves the union of strength and speed with great sagacity. Besides these, we had a brace of fine pointers, *Black* and *Stop*, dogs that followed to heel without requiring a leash.

We were all fully armed: some with that short

and heavy rifle which is so deadly in the hands of a Kentuckian, and the others with double-barrelled guns. As for the Canadians, they were content with old-fashioned French duck-guns with flint locks. Eugene carried a bowie-knife as well, and, instead of our European costumes, we had all mounted Indian dresses—tight pantaloons made of tanned deer's hide, a hunting-shirt of the same material, and doubled-soled moccasins. Broad-brimmed felt hats completed our masquerading, under which no one could have recognised Messrs. Daniel Simonton, of New York; George Sears, of Boston; Horace Mead, of Philadelphia; Fortuné Delmot, of Paris; and the author of this book. As for the Canadians, their names were Duquesne, Bonnet, and Gemmel.

We had started from St. Louis with the intention of hunting with the Sioux Indians and the Foxes. We expected to pass two months in the tents, and to return to civilisation with an ample stock of spoils and trophies.

Mr. Daniel Simonton and myself were riding at the head of the party, talking of hunting, game, and all manner of things, and letting our horses go their own pace, with the bridles hanging loosely over their necks. "So you've never seen buffalo, my good friend. Well, I think I can safely promise you that to-morrow you shall have that pleasure. This is the fourth time I've been this way, and in

the distance I see a place which is often frequented by the creatures. I remember two years ago, when I was last this way on a hunting expedition, I was in the middle of that valley which you see down there, and which looks like a kind of irregular circus which you can see all over at the same time, when I heard a loud noise in the distance. Whilst I was puzzling myself to think what this could be, and before I could ask a question of the Indians who were with me, I saw a herd of buffalo enter the valley from the other end. Without exaggeration, there must have been thousands of them. As swift as thought the eight Sioux who were with me began firing, and I joined them without delay. The firing of our guns and the roaring of the buffaloes caused a scene of confusion not to be described, until the herd, escaping by all the issues, left us in the valley, with ten of their number,—three dangerously wounded, and seven dead. We could hear the stamping of the flying herd for an hour afterwards. Oh, you may depend upon it we shall have sport to-morow."

"So be it," I cried. "I accept the augury. I must confess that I am rather tired at not having had a shot at large game since we left St. Louis."

As we talked in this manner, we arrived at a place called by the Indians *Ehäu Bosiudatah*, or "River of the Great King," near an encampment of Sioux, whose wigwams, erected on the banks of the stream,

had quite a picturesque aspect. This camp had an extraordinary appearance to the eyes of a European. The conical-roofed tents made of deer-skins and adorned with quaint devices, were arranged in a semicircle, in the midst of which was a tent much larger and more ornamented than those which surrounded it.

Mr. Simonton, after being introduced to the chief, showed him the cabalistic talisman which he had obtained at Washington at the office of the Indian Commissioners, and the chief gave orders immediately that we should be treated as friends and brothers. Faithful to the traditions of his fathers and to the customs of his people, the chief filled a pipe, the bowl of which was made of a red stone, with odoriferous tobacco, and having solemnly smoked a few puffs, passed it on to Mr. Simonton, thus ratifying an oath of friendship which nothing could release him from. The calumet was then passed round to each guest in turn.

The tribe of Sioux with whom we found ourselves are known as Whapatookas, and numbered four hundred warriors, with five hundred women. Their language was the Narcotah, a primitive dialect which, according to certain linguists, bears some resemblance to the Tartar Mantchou. Indeed, there is a legend, which was narrated to me during my stay among the Red Skins, and which attributes the origin of the Sioux race to a horde of Tartars who

managed to cross Behring's Straits and settle on the borders of Missouri.

The men were, for the most part, well and strongly built, and I could not help admiring their regular features and coal-black eyes. Each of them had a horse of small breed, not very dissimilar to those which are so common among the Algerian Arabs. The women were small and pretty, at least such of them as were not more than fourteen years old; for among the Indians they begin to grow old and ugly at an age which in Europe is scarcely thought to be marriageable. Men and women were dressed alike in garments made of tanned skins, and were adorned with tattoo-marks of red, blue, and black. A short hunting-shirt, reaching down to the hips; tight pantaloons with fringes cut in the leather; moccasins on their feet, and head-dresses of all kinds of feathers, the chiefs wearing plumes from the eagle's wing. The tents in which they sheltered themselves were made, like their garments, of tanned skins, embroidered with porcupine quills, and supported by poles, so arranged as to be able to withstand the utmost violence of the weather.

Such was the encampment towards which chance had conducted my companions and myself. We hastened to unload the carts, and brought our goods and chattels under shelter, not forgetting those pots and stewpans which form so useful an addition to a hunter's outfit when he is in a country full of game.

That evening, thanks to the activity of our Canadians, we encamped in good order, and enjoyed a capital supper; for the Indians made us a present of some venison. We slept the sleep of the just, after concluding our arrangements with the chief, through the medium of Duquesne, one of our Canadians, who had spent a long time with the Red Skins, and knew something of their language. On payment of six dollars per month for each of us, we were to be guided and protected by the Sioux, and conducted back again to the limits of Missouri.

Next morning, the whole tribe was afoot, for it had been decided to remove the encampment twenty-five miles, to the banks of the Ayoua. The horses of the Indians were all laden with baggage, and even the women (always the helots of savage life) performed the part of beasts of burden, carrying loads which a *civilised* porter could scarcely have lifted. The beauties of the tribe were allowed to walk, without having their backs bent by any heavy loads; and, in spite of everything, of the red skin and the garments which hid their graceful forms, some of these were very pretty. Even these, however, had to lead some of the horses by the bridle.

We led the way on horseback, and the procession was nearly two miles long. The old women cried out, the children were squalling, and the innumerable dogs were barking: in a word, such a noisy scene of confusion never saluted my eyes and ears.

It is usual during these marches to stop every two leagues, unload the horses, and let them rest and feed for half an hour.

After the second halt, the hunters of the tribe (that is to say, the youngest and the most skilful) separated themselves from the tribe and dispersed themselves over the prairies, searching everywhere for game with as much sagacity as a dog regularly trained for sport. When the Red Skins hunt in this manner, they dash into the midst of the most likely coverts, and when they put up a deer or anything else, if the creature escapes the first shot, he never goes far without meeting with another Indian more fortunate or more skilful.

When snow is on the ground the Sioux proceed in a different manner. One of them follows up the traces of a deer until he has found the place where the animal has taken refuge. He then searches carefully all round, to ascertain whether the animal be still there, and then he crawls into the thicket in a circular direction, narrowing his circle gradually until he comes upon his game. Directly the deer rises to break cover, the rifle of the Indian brings him down.

Two of my companions, Sears and Delmot, joined me in a *sortie* this day. We went on in line, and our dogs soon came upon a scent behind a clump of cotton bushes growing on the banks of a little stream. I forgot to call the attention of my

friends, and strayed apart from them about three miles, when *Black* and *Stop* (with whom I could scarcely keep pace) started a magnificent antelope, though unfortunately at a long distance before them. From the summit of the hill which I had reached I could see before me a gaping ravine at right angles with the stream. I galloped my horse towards it, in the uncertain hope that the antelope would try and make his escape in that direction; and I had scarcely time to conceal myself and my horse behind a clump of stunted lentisk trees and to dismount, when the two spiral horns of the antelope became visible against the blue sky, and I could see the animal bounding rapidly towards me, with the two dogs at his heels.

"That's all right," quoth I to myself,—selling the antelope's skin before he was within gunshot.

When the antelope had got within two hundred yards of me, I saw three little puffs of smoke, and heard three shots, but none of them had touched him, for he swept on scornfully and at a tremendous pace. My heart beat with emotion, as I took a careful aim at the antelope, ready to press the trigger, when, from within twenty paces of my place of concealment, came a fourth shot, and my much coveted prize, which I had regarded already as my own, rolled upon the grass dead, and an Indian sprang out of a clump of cotton bushes with that

shrill "*whoop!*" which is the signal of victory. I must confess that I was furious, and that for the moment I felt strongly tempted to have a shot at the Sioux; but my absurd anger soon evaporated, and I called my dogs, swearing never again to expose myself to the mortification of having 'my nose wiped' in this disgraceful manner by separating myself from my fellow-sportsmen.

When you hunt in company on the American prairies, there is a custom which is very consoling for those who have a good appetite. The skin and antlers belong to the fortunate hunter, and the meat is shared equally with those who have not been so lucky. This rule has no exception, and it is a very fair one; for, without it, such is the selfishness of the Indians, that the greater number would sometimes run the risk of being famished. When a deer, a buffalo, or an antelope has been killed, the fortunate hunter quietly lights his pipe, sits down, and waits patiently while his companions flay and divide the game, bringing him his share, which he accepts without a word.

I returned to camp sorely disappointed, and the only consolation I had was, that my friends Sears and Delmot had not been a bit more fortunate than myself.

Next morning, after a night which had only been disturbed by the barkings of the dogs, who treated us to as frightful a music as ever kept a weary man

awake, the tribe once more set out, whilst we continued our sport, as it were, on the wings of the procession. On this day, we killed a great many prairie hens, a small feathered game which ran about among the grass, and got up from under the noses of our dogs with as little ceremony as a hen in a farm-yard. On reaching the camp, we found it pitched by the side of a wood, consisting of dwarf oaks and cotton plants, with a stream running close by.

In the middle of the night, there was a terrible alarm of fire, and we were awoke by the yells of the Indians, who were flying northward in the greatest confusion towards an eminence which rose from the middle of a lake. For three miles behind us, the prairie was on fire, and the flames advanced as rapidly as a horse in full gallop, fanned by a wind which threatened to rise to a tempest. Nothing could equal the sublime horror of the spectacle. It was like a winding-sheet of flame ignited with the rapidity of gunpowder, and advancing with an infernal crackling, throwing up the most fantastic forms, and preceded by a multitude of all kinds of animals flying for their very life.

When we arrived on the sandy shores of the lake we were safe, for there was nothing combustible around us. Gradually the flames disappeared, as nothing was left to be consumed, and fortunately none of our party was missing.

When day broke, the horrible death which we had escaped was revealed to us in all its frightful reality. As far as we could see to the southward, there was nothing visible but burnt-up soil, as black as a coal, and here and there, around the trunk of a tree which had resisted better than the herbage, the flames still flickered, and heaps of ashes still smoked. All along the stream, which emptied itself into the lake, the devastating fire had stopped short, and the chief of the Sioux remarked that this was very fortunate for us, for the country on the other side would be practicable for sporting. Nevertheless, he advised that we should all stay for a day where we were, so as to allow the violence of the conflagration to expend itself.

The Sioux pitched their tents upon the rocky soil, and whilst Duquesne, Bonnet, and Gemmel were arranging our domicile, Messrs. Simonton and Sears and myself started on a short journey of exploration. Advancing towards the north-west, we found some rocks and an abundance of water-fowl. Further on, we came upon some cliffs which were laved by the waters of the lake, and there we found clouds of penguins and gulls, with their black wings and white breasts shining in the sun. There were herons also among the rough granite rocks, and we counted seventy-two in one group, bowing to each other with the gravity of Chinese mandarins. Nothing could be more comic than the

grave and mechanical deliberateness of their salutations.

After we had watched all these birds for some time, we presently saw two enormous eagles flying in our direction; and their appearance created a terrible commotion in the feathered republic. In a moment, the two birds of prey each seized a young heron and crushed it in his formidable talons; then, utterly disregardful of the reproaches of the rest, they took flight again and disappeared.

This took place so rapidly that neither my friend nor myself had time to get within shot of these bandits of the air. However, we afterwards got within reach of the herons, and all three firing our double-barrels as rapidly as possible, we bagged eleven large birds. The rest took flight.

On returning to the camp we found them all packing up and ready to start; the dogs were barking and the Red Skins hurrying about in every direction.

"Come on!" cried Mead and Delmot (who had stayed in camp), "we are only waiting for you."

"What is it?" we replied.

"Buffalo! Look there! Look at that black mass advancing towards us. It's the buffalo!"

As far as the sight could reach to the northward there was a black line on the horizon, and this was a herd of those animals browsing peacefully on the herbage of the prairie.

For us Europeans, who had never seen cattle in larger herds than from two to three hundred, the sight of from five to six thousand of these animals was astonishing. To start off at once and attack them was our first impulse; and it needed all the coolness and experience of the Sioux chief and of Duquesne, our sworn interpreter, to calm our impetuosity.

"The Pale-Faces are too eager," said the chief. "They must learn patience, without which there is no success, and they must learn the ways of their red brethren to entrap the bison. This is my plan. The tribe must divide, one half to the west and the other to the north. The latter, advancing along the stream, will get round them against the wind. It is the only way, and in two hours the Pale-Faces will be face to face with the bison." So saying, the chief sprang on his spirited little horse, and looked like an Indian Nimrod.

The signal for departure was given, and the strictest silence was enjoined upon all. A select body of hunters occupied the centre, and we followed close after the chief. The files started to the west and north, and we advanced towards the herd.

The reader should understand that the innumerable herds that pasture on the American prairies are always on the look-out for foes. The Indians chase them so frequently, and the coyotes are so eager in pursuit, that every animal has its instinct

sharpened to the utmost pitch of intensity. With their noses to the wind, and their ears pricked up, the bisons nearest to us began to look like pickets looking out for the approach of an enemy.

Thanks to the uneven nature of the ground, which the chief thoroughly understood, we arrived within two rifle-shots of the nearest bison,—an enormous brute, with a shaggy mane and small flexible legs. He did not seem to have the slightest suspicion of our approach.

Suddenly, there arose a fearful noise: the whole herd was in motion. We had almost got within reach of the buffaloes without being discovered, but some of the Red Skins had got to windward, and had been both seen and smelt from afar, and by a happy chance the flight took place in our direction. Never did I so thoroughly realise the sublime euphony of the expressive verse of the Swan of Mantua—

"Quadrupedante putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum."

The hoofs of the bisons beat the earth with a regular trot like a charge of cavalry. We all looked at our rifles as the herd rushed forwards, and saw that the caps were all right. The moment was critical, for it was necessary for us to show ourselves, in order to drive the herd back. We followed the Sioux chief, and rushed in front of the buffalo.

Never shall I forget the sight that presented

itself on that 27th of October, 1845, when I reached the top of the hill, behind which we had concealed ourselves. A torrent of monsters was rushing upon us, bellowing with all their might, and galloping as swiftly as possible. The Sioux raised their whoop, and we all began firing as rapidly as possible. The chief selected one of the largest animals in the herd, and soon made an end of him. The rest of the Sioux rushed on, and then the butchering commenced. From all sides came the "ping" of rifle bullets, and the whistle of the arrows from those who had no fire-arms. If one had had the coolness to watch this scene, and examine it calmly, it would have been a glorious scene for a painter; but thrown as I was in the midst of that whirlpool of men, I had nothing to do but to burn powder like the rest. The rage of carnage was upon us, and we were all more or less mad.

This sport had lasted for nearly half an hour, when suddenly there was a cry of "The cows! the cows!" and presently we saw another herd of bisons coming up behind that which we had been attacking.

The fact is, the cow bisons always separate themselves from the bulls, the latter forming the advance, and the latter the rear-guard of the great quadrupedal army. To get at the cows, you must penetrate the serried lines of the bulls, and here is the great danger. One of our Indians, who had

been thrown from his horse, was now attacked by a bison with such fury, and so trampled upon and tossed, as if his body was a mere plaything, that it needed a broadside of three rifles to release the poor wretch from his misery.

The rapidity with which the Indians fired off their guns was astonishing, and their manner of loading was equally extraordinary. The first charge was properly rammed down, but for the rest the Sioux were content to pour in the powder, whilst they held in their mouths three or four bullets, which they dropped into the barrel one by one, so anointed with saliva that they stuck to the powder.

The hunt after the cows lasted about twenty minutes, and when the recall was sounded we counted up the game, which was spread over a large extent of ground. There were a hundred and forty-nine buffaloes lying dead on the ground; that is to say, a hundred and seventeen bulls and thirty-two cows. The latter are much more esteemed for eating purposes than the males, whose flesh is hard, meagre, and of musky flavour. The cow's meat, on the contrary, is as fat as the best butcher's meat, and under the skin there is a layer of fat at least two inches thick.

My friends Sears, Simonton, and Delmot, had each killed their buffalo; but Mr. Mead and myself could only claim to have had a share in killing

others. Our Canadians, Bonnet, Duquesne and Gemmel, had killed among them a splendid cow, which they were gazing upon with delight when we discovered them.

The first thing the Indians do after having carefully removed the *robe* from the buffalo, is to take out the intestines and lay them aside as the tid-bit of the animal. They then take off the hump, a fleshy piece on the back streaked with hard fat, which is the most highly prized of all by the epicures of the country. Finally, they cut off the fillets and some other parts fit to dry for keeping.

When these preparations were completed, everybody began to think seriously of dinner, or rather of that orgie which always follows a successful hunt on the American prairie. The Sioux squaws had now arrived on the scene of action, and had cut up their game. The best pieces were selected and carried in the skins towards the camp, the hunters bringing up the rear mounted on their horses, whose neighings responded to the "whoops!" of their riders. Then, whilst the squaws were washing the entrails of the buffaloes in the waters of the lake, the men set to work to dig a number of holes, which they paved with stones and filled with wood and lighted twigs. When the stones were sufficiently heated and the holes were as hot as a baker's oven, they placed the meat in them and covered it up with stones and hot ashes.

Whilst waiting for their feast, the Sioux enjoyed a foretaste of the coming pleasure by devouring the half-washed entrails of the newly killed buffaloes. They devoured this disgusting food exactly as the Neapolitans eat macaroni. Sometimes two of them will seize a piece and each will take an end in his mouth. When that happens, it is equally curious and disgusting to see the manner in which they fight, lest one should have the bigger share of the morsel.

At last the cooking was finished, and the Canadian, Duquesne, our chief cook, served us up the buffalo's hump done to a turn; and very succulent and delicious it was. After removing the carbonised envelope which surrounded this morsel for a prince, our knives and forks were plunged into delicate mixture of fat and lean, resembling in shape an enormous sweetbread of black meat, and in flavour the flesh of the hare. This rich buffalo meat is truly delicious, and so digestible that (whether it be the digestion of the hunter on the prairies resembles that of the ostrich, or because the pure air of the desert requires a large amount of nourishment) you may swallow with impunity large quantities of food without experiencing any of the uncomfortable consequences of too hearty an appetite. As for the buffalo's hump, I am persuaded that if Brillat de Savarin had ever tasted one, he would have consecrated a special chapter to its honour.

That evening, when the "fire-water" which washed down the buffalo meat had driven away that apathy which is the characteristic of the Indian character, an extraordinary spectacle excited our astonishment. Men and women began to dance in the wildest and most fantastic style, with strange contortions that recalled to mind the *bamboulas* of the negroes of Louisiana. There was no music to accompany this bacchanal dance, except a few hoarse voices chanting a jerking kind of melody, which served as the theme for the modulated variations which were sung *ad libitum* by the dancers. There was indeed a solitary guitar in front of our tent, badly played enough, but still charming to the unaccustomed ears of the Sioux. I shall narrate the history of this guitar presently; but, for the present, let us return to the buffaloes.

I do not think it would be very serviceable to weary the reader with an account of the form, size, and habits of this royal member of the bovine race. Buffon and Audubon have described the creature thoroughly, and I shall confine myself to a few points which ought to be well known to the hunter.

There are few animals so tenacious of life as the buffalo; unless he be hit in the lungs, or has his spinal cord broken, it is difficult to kill him. Sometimes even when he has been mortally wounded in the heart, he retains a sufficient amount of vital force to get away, and die an immense distance off,

especially if he happen to see the hunter following his track. If, however, the hunter remains quiet, and hides himself, the quarry will stop short, and soon sink upon the ground, to rise no more. It is horrible to see the last moments of a dying buffalo. The noble brute seems to understand that as soon as it falls to the ground it is all over with it, and consequently it makes the greatest efforts to avoid this catastrophe. I have seen a bull, shot through both the lungs and the heart, spouting blood from the mouth and nostrils, its eyes already glazing over with the shades of death, but straddling its legs so as to keep on its feet, and resisting to its last breath that inevitable death which it seemed to defy by filling the air with its terrible bellowings. At last the poor brute makes a last effort to keep on its legs, and then its body rolls over like a foundering ship, its head turning from side to side, and its eyes searching around for the enemy who has reduced its mighty strength to nothing. The more the creature totters, the nearer it is to death. Large drops of blood issue from its nostrils; it stiffens on its four feet; a convulsive trembling agitates the enormous mass, and then, collecting all its strength for a mighty bellow, the buffalo falls upon its side as stiff as a corpse that has been dead for hours.

The first time that a novice attempts to kill a bison (however skilful he may be with a deer), he

is sure to fail. Seeing before him such an enormous mass, he imagines that he has only to plant a bullet in the body of the giant to reach the vital parts of the animal. There could be no greater mistake: to kill a buffalo on the spot you must hit him between the shoulder-blades, near the dorsal spine, and the stroke will certainly be fatal.

During the two months which I spent among the Sioux, I only killed two bisons to my own gun. The first had received a shot in the chest, which had penetrated the heart, and the hole was sufficiently wide to allow the finger to pass in. Yet the creature had been able to run two miles from the place where I had shot him. The second sustained two shots; the former of which broke its fore-leg, and the other pierced its lungs; and yet in spite of this double wound it was able to rush on wildly for nearly a quarter of an hour. I have seen an old bull bison receive eighteen bullets at ten paces distance, and although his body was riddled like a sieve, he has run more than a mile from the place where he received the broadside, succumbing only at last to a bullet which broke the frontal bone.

It should be observed that the head of the buffalo is covered with a fur so thick and matted, that a bullet finds its way to the brain with difficulty, unless the rifle be discharged at a short distance from

the creature.* Often have I made the experiment, and the ball has rebounded, flattened, as if it had been fired against an iron target.

In spite of the enormous destruction caused by the Indian trappers and pioneers among the innumerable herds which animate the monotony of the prairies, many years must elapse before this prolific race disappears from the American continent. In spite of the numerous enemies who are banded for their destruction, the bisons still pasture by thousands upon the plains, and cover the verdant hills of the Far West. It would be well, however, if the American government could find some means of preventing the ultimate disappearance of this noble quadruped, which is such an ornament to the prairies, and such a resource for the caravans which travel to Sante-Fé and California. The extent to which these animals are slaughtered may be imagined, when I state, that in the United States and Canada there are sold every year more than 900,000 of their skins. Moreover, it is to be noted, that these robes are those of the cows only, the skins of the bulls being too thick to be easily tanned. The Indians, moreover, keep a large quantity of the skins for their own use—for their tents, beds, canoes, and many other useful appliances. I may add, more-

* It should be observed that these experiences refer to a period antecedent to the invention of the Minié bullet, and the modern arms of force and precision.—TRANS.

over, to this catalogue of destructiveness, that the caravans which traverse those prairies vie with each other in the number of buffaloes killed on the road. It is the task of the eagles to whiten the bones of those innumerable skeletons that give to certain passes among the Rocky Mountains the title of "The Buffaloes Cemetery."

On reading this, many of my readers may feel incredulous about the accuracy of my statements. In order to leave no room for doubt on that head, I copy here a passage from a letter addressed by Governor Stevens, one of the most experienced explorers of the American prairie, to one of the editors of the New Orleans *Daily Picayune*:—

"The Foot of the Rocky Mountains,
May 8th, 1859.

"On Sunday, after a ten-mile march, we came up to the buffaloes. The herd extended before us, and on each side, as far as we could see. Our most enthusiastic companions judged them to be 500,000 strong, and the most, no doubt, of us, did not put them below 200,000. At midday, when we made our customary halt, an immense quantity of them approached our camp, and immediately six hunters, mounted on fresh horses which had been reserved for the purpose, dashed on, and treated the whole party to the spectacle of a buffalo hunt. The hunters galloped as fast as their horses could

carry them, penetrating the thickest ranks of the buffaloes, and soon disappearing behind a thick cloud of dust. The buffaloes wavered and began to rush about, uttering the most formidable bellowings. To see the mass of heads tossing about, you would have thought it a sea in a storm. The hunters darted about, choosing the fattest cows, and separating them from the rest of the herd, when they killed them without difficulty: and when the combat was over, our waggons advanced to the field of battle and returned heavily laden with the choicest morsels of the buffaloes.

"For two days afterwards we had to send our hunters ahead to clear the road; and as fast as the herd was dispersed in front, it collected again behind us, and even mixed with our mules and reserve horses. In spite of all our precautions, five of our animals have escaped and joined the wild beasts, and we have endeavoured in vain to recover them by searching among the forest of horns, and we have been obliged to abandon our deserters to the nomad life of the prairies."

I resume my story. Life in the prairies has in it a great deal of sameness, and yet, in spite of its monotony, it has a charm for the true sportsman so irresistible that, as I write these lines, seated at my comfortable desk, and surrounded by all those appliances of civilisation which render a bachelor's

existence so endurable, I could return to the verdant savannas without regret, and once more engage in hunting the buffalo, the deer, or the antelope. During my stay in the United States, I met with trappers who had once known all the pleasures of civilised life, and who, by the chance of fortune, had been brought into this savage state, yet who had become so accustomed to the manners, the pleasures, and the vicissitudes of the wild life, that they would never have given up their couch of reeds under a rickety tent for the best feather-bed in the palace of a prince. A man must have experienced this mode of life to understand the feeling.

I cannot now describe all the sport we engaged in in the company of the Sioux and their chief. If I were to give a list of all the buffaloes killed during the period of our stay with the Red Skins, perhaps I might be accused of drawing the longbow.

In 1841, when I started for the United States, I took with me a capital gun, by Saint Etienne, the cost of which was very much below the excellence of the weapon. This double-barrelled fowling-piece had accompanied me on all my sporting expeditions, and I preferred it to the best rifles borne by my companions. The excellence and precision of this gun had not escaped the notice of the chief, and I could not help observing that he cast upon it the same kind of wistful glances which a lover addresses to his mistress. One morning, a few days

before that fixed for our return to St. Louis, the Chief came to me boldly, and said in his expressive language: "My white brother has a good gun. He will not take it back, but will give it to his friend. His friend is the Chief, and should have the best gun in the tribe."

"I would willingly do so," I replied, "but I am very fond of the gun, and it quite suits me."

"I will give the pale-face its full value in the finest furs. Come to my tent, and take what you will."

I went to the Chief's tent, and he exhibited a magnificent collection of the richest furs; sables, grey and blue foxes, ermines, musk rats, enough to stock a furrier's shop. The Chief then told me that he was one of the principal purveyors to the North American Fur Company, and these were the produce of the last four months' hunting. In a fortnight the agent of the company would take them away. "Let my brother choose," said he, "and take the value of his gun." I took him at his word, selected a good parcel of furs, and handed him over the gun. I hope it is still in the hands of its master, and that it has been fortunate.

I must not forget that I promised to tell the reader the story of my guitar. It was the gift of one of my uncles previous to my departure, and it was with difficulty that I could extract

from it anything but a miserable accompaniment to a song or ballad. The day before I left New York, Daniel Simonton happened to look on to superintend my preparations, and seeing the guitar hanging up in a corner of the room, advised me strongly to pack it up with the rest of my baggage.

"What on earth can I do with such rubbish?" cried I. "We are not going to hunt buffaloes with guitars, or, like Orpheus, charm the birds and wild beasts with its primitive music."

"Certainly not," he replied, "but it may be useful to charm—not wild beasts, but men."

"How so?"

"Never mind, pack it up."

This was how it came to pass that I took a guitar to the camp of the Sioux Indians, and there it remained almost forgotten in its black case, and at the bottom of one of the carts, until one evening Mr. Simonton remembered it. We had just supped, and were smoking our pipes around a blazing fire, when Mr. Simonton ordered Gemmel, one of our Canadian servants, to go and look up the black box. It was soon forthcoming, and then Mr. Simonton, having opened and unpacked it from the silk handkerchief in which it was wrapped up, exhibited it to the Red Skins, who were crowding round with infantine curiosity.

"Now, my dear friend," said he, "now or never

is the time for showing off your talents. Do your best, and you must inevitably charm your audience."

These words, spoken in French, were understood by me alone. I struck a few chords, and watched the effect upon the audience. It was magical; the Indians all crowded round, men and women, keeping the most profound silence. Then, overcoming my diffidence, I began to play as well as I was able a few reminiscences of the best composers, and the effect was like enchantment. The performance was somewhat varied, not to say incongruous, but at the conclusion it was greeted with the most enthusiastic applause, expressed in the form of "*Whoowhoo!*"

I had noticed among the Red Skins a young girl with a very pretty figure, feet like those of a child, and bright black eyes, who, on hearing the first notes of my guitar, came and placed herself by my side and kept her eyes fixed upon the movements of my fingers. When the improvisation was concluded, Otami (that was her name) asked to be allowed to examine the guitar. She scanned it over curiously, and endeavoured with her little hands to imitate the movements of my fingers. She tried to strike a chord but in vain, and I was amused at the expression of infantine vexation which crossed her pretty though dusky features.

Next day we were compelled by the weather to stay in camp, and I was busy about something under the shelter of one of our waggons when Otami came

up, escorted by the Chief and Duquesne. She wished me to teach her how to play upon the guitar. I hardly knew how to play upon it myself, and yet I consented to teach the young Indian maiden. Every evening she came to me, and in a fortnight her pretty little hands were more skilful than mine were.

The day before our departure Otami came to me and asked me as a great favour to exchange the guitar for a very complete and beautifully embroidered Sioux costume, which she had made with her own hands. I had already intended to offer her the toy, which was of no real use to me, so I told her that although it had been my intention to give it to her without any return, I could not resist the pleasure of accepting, by way of *souvenir*, the beautiful present which she offered me. It was indeed a remarkably well-made costume. It was made of the hide of the deer, prepared as only the Indians know how to prepare it, and embroidered with patterns of porcupine quills in all manner of colours. The hunting-shirt bordered with fringe, the leggings, the moccasins, girdle and head-dress, ornamented with beautiful red, blue, black and green feathers, the calumet, pouch for ammunition, and gloves, all fitted me so well that when I put them on I should have looked like a genuine Sioux warrior if I had only been tattooed in the orthodox fashion.

The bargain was now concluded, as the reader

may imagine, and Otami offered her cheeks for a chaste salute by way of ratification.

A few hours after that we were on horseback on our way back, taking the road by Independence. Fifty Sioux warriors were to escort us to Fort Leavenworth, the first civilized habitation on the frontiers of the desert. During our first day's journey it rained from morning to night, and next day it was no better; but on the third the weather cleared up. I shall always remember that day, on account of a remarkable and memorable adventure.

We had just entered a gorge which was overgrown with bushes, when Duquesne, whose horse was trotting alongside of mine, suddenly cried a halt. He slipped off his horse and laid his ear upon the ground to listen. After a second or two, he asked us to follow his example and, obedient to his request, we all did as he desired, but were compelled to admit that our hearing was rather defective. Three times we repeated the experiment, and on the fourth only could we distinguish a feeble and insignificant noise, which grew more and more distinct at every moment.

To shelter our horses behind a clump of trees, alongside of our three waggons, occupied a very short time. We then glided through a thicket, and came out into a clearing on the other side; every one waiting for the chance of a shot.

What was it? Deers, coyotes, antelopes or buffalo? No one knew. I cocked the rifle which I had borrowed of Mr. Mead, and awaited the result. Suddenly, in the open space before us appeared about twenty buffaloes, rushing madly on with such impetuosity that we could hear the snapping of the branches which they broke down n their course. Unfortunately they were all far off, and it was impossible to take aim with any chance of success. I began to fear that the herd would escape us altogether, when I saw a splendid bull buffalo within about fifteen paces of me trotting along slowly, and dragging one of his legs with considerable difficulty. I took aim and waited a moment to see what was the matter, when a magnificent panther appeared giving chase to the buffalo. Nothing could be finer than the appearance of this great feline of the North; with head erect and eyes shining like live coals, it bounded after its victim, roaring fiercely, and getting closer to its prey with every bound. It was a splendid spectacle for us to see these noble brutes, both of whose lives were now fairly in our hands. I was just going to fire on the panther, when, with a tremendous bound, it alighted on the back of the buffalo, and both rolled over on the ground, the one holding on like grim death, and the other doing its best to shake off its deadly foe. The panther had fastened on the wound already made,

and sucked the life-blood of the buffalo, who presently rolled over upon its side, giving no signs of life.

This was the moment to fire, and without waiting for any place of concealment, I aimed and pulled the trigger. Through the smoke I could see the panther give a tremendous bound, and then fall in the agonies of death. Mr. Mead came forward, and gave it the *coup de grace*.

It was the finest of the kind I had ever shot, and we lost no time in despoiling it of its spotted robe. I still possess this beautiful skin, and it is one of my handsomest trophies. As for the buffalo, he was as dead as a stone. The panther had surprised him by leaping upon him from a tree, and his jugular was divided.

On arriving at St. Louis we took leave of our friends, and Messrs. Delmot and Simonton and myself started up the Ohio, to reach the State of New York by way of the Lakes and the Falls of Niagara. We all three embarked on board the steamer *Jefferson*, a kind of floating mansion, crammed with people from the keel to her deck. We started in the evening, and with all the confusion which attends the departure of a steamer in America. I had confided all my baggage to the care of the negroes on board, and among the rest were the two packets, one filled with the furs of the Sioux chief, and the other with Otami's costume.

All had been stowed away under my very eyes, and a chain passed through the cords of each package, and a padlock at the ends of that. Surely I had a right to think that everything was safe. Alas! I had not taken into account the accomplished thieves who infest these river steamers in America. I should have taken better heed of the significant warning which adorned every part of our floating phalanstery, "Beware of thieves and pickpockets." Next morning, after breakfast, I went to see whether the stoppages at the different stations had caused any derangement of my luggage, and to my dismay the two precious packets were nowhere to be found. I stamped and swore; I threatened the stupid brute who had taken charge of my goods to hold him responsible for the loss; it was all of no use. Whether by theft or mistake, I had lost my furs and my Sioux dress irrecoverably. There was nothing for it but to resign myself to my misfortune with a philosophic spirit.

Of my sojourn among the Red Skins I retain no memento but a bow and a few arrows; a pouch for powder and ball, embroidered with porcupine's quills; and my panther's skin. Into whose hands the rest of my trophies have fallen I know not.

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